



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



3 3433 07483076 5

The
Gordon Lester Ford
Collection
Presented by his Sons
Worthington Chauncy Ford
and
Paul Leicester Ford
to the
New York Public Library

Camp -

Digitized by Google

1101

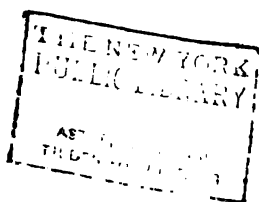
Leave this fly b.p.

Primer the 1st

Poe

(Co

N



DMS 1347



Car. H. 15. 10

WILLIAM COWPER.

POEMS,

BY

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ.

OF THE INNER TEMPLE.

In three Volumes.

COMPRISING

A Variety of Pieces

NOT INSERTED IN FORMER EDITIONS.

To which is prefixed

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE.

VOL. I.

.....
Sicut aquæ tremulum labris ubi lumen ahenis
Sole repercussum, aut radiantis imagine lunæ,
Omnia pervolat late loca, jamque sub auras
Erigitur, summique serit laquearia tecti.

VIRG. ÆN. VIII.

So water, trembling in a polish'd vase,
Reflects the beam that plays upon its face ;
The sportive light, uncertain where it falls,
Now strikes the roof, now flashes on the walls.

.....

AMHERST, N. H.

PRINTED BY JOSEPH CUSHING.

Sold by him at his Bookstore ; by Manning & Loring No. 2,
and by Lincoln & Edmands, No. 53, Cornhill, Boston.

1808.

171259

PREFACE

TO THE

FIRST VOLUME.

WHEN an Author, by appearing in print, requests an audience of the public, and is upon the point of speaking for himself, whoever presumes to step before him with a preface, and to say, "Nay, but hear me first," should have something worthy of attention to offer, or he will be justly deemed officious and impertinent. The judicious reader has, probably, upon other occasions, been beforehand with me in this reflection: and I am not very willing it should now be applied to me, however I may seem to expose myself to the danger of it. But the thought of having my own name perpetuated in connexion with the name in the title page, is so pleasing and flattering to the feelings of my heart, that I am content to risk something for the gratification.

This Preface is not designed to commend the Poems to which it is prefixed. My testimony would be insufficient for those who are not qualified to judge prop-

erly for themselves, and unnecessary to those who are. Besides, the reasons which render it improper and unseemly for a man to celebrate his own performances, or those of his nearest relatives, will have some influence in suppressing much of what he might otherwise wish to say in favour of a *friend*, when that friend is indeed an *alter idem*, and excites almost the same emotions of sensibility and affection as he feels for himself.

It is very probable these Poems may come into the hands of some persons, in whom the sight of the Author's name will awaken a recollection of incidents and scenes, which, through length of time, they had almost forgotten. They will be reminded of *one*, who was once the companion of their chosen hours, and who set out in early life with them in the paths which lead to literary honours, to influence and affluence, with equal prospects of success. But he was suddenly and powerfully withdrawn from those pursuits; and he left them without regret; yet not till he had sufficient opportunity of counting the cost, and of knowing the value of what he gave up. If happiness could have been found in classical attainments, in an elegant taste, in the exertions of wit, fancy, and genius, and in the esteem and converse of such persons as, in these respects, were most congenial with himself, he would have been happy. But he was not.—He wondered (as thousands in a similar situation still do) that he should continue dissatisfied, with all the means apparently conducive to satisfaction within his reach.—But in due

ture, the cause of his disappointment was discovered to him.—He had lived without God in the world. In a memorable hour, the wisdom which is from above visited his heart. Then he felt himself a wanderer, and then he found a guide. Upon this change of views, a change of plan and conduct followed of course. When he saw the busy and the gay world in its true light, he left it with as little reluctance, as a prisoner, when called to liberty, leaves his dungeon. Not that he became a Cynic or an Ascetic.—A heart, filled with love to God, will assuredly breathe benevolence to men. But the turn of his temper inclining him to rural life, he indulged it, and the providence of God evidently preparing his way, and marking out his retreat, he retired into the country. By these steps the good hand of God, unknown to me, was providing for me one of the principal blessings of my life; a friend and a counsellor, in whose company for almost seven years, though we were seldom seven successive waking hours separated, I always found new pleasure. A friend, who was not only a comfort to myself, but a blessing to the affectionate poor people, among whom I then lived.

Some time after inclination had thus removed him from the hurry and bustle of life, he was still more secluded by a long indisposition, and my pleasure was succeeded by a proportionable degree of anxiety and concern. But a hope, that the God whom he serv-

ed would support him under his affliction, and at length vouchsafe him a happy deliverance, never forsok me. The desirable crisis, I trust, is now nearly approaching. The dawn, the presage of returning day, is already arrived. He is again enabled to resume his pen, and some of the first fruits of his recovery are here presented to the public. In his principal subjects, the same acumen which distinguished him in the early period of life, is happily employed in illustrating and enforcing the truths of which he received such deep and unalterable impressions in his maturer years. His satire, if it may be called so, is benevolent, (like the operations of the skilful and humane surgeon, who wounds only to heal) dictated by a just regard for the honour of God, an indignant grief, excited by the profligacy of the age, and a tender compassion for the souls of men.

His favorite topics are least insisted on in the piece entitled Table Talk; which, therefore, with some regard to the prevailing taste, and that those who are governed by it may not be discouraged at the very threshold from proceeding farther, is placed first. In most of the larger Poems which follow, his leading design is more explicitly avowed and pursued. He aims to communicate his own perceptions of the truth, beauty, and influence of the religion of the Bible.— A religion, which, however discredited by the miscon-

duct of many who have not renounced the Christian name, proves itself, when rightly understood, and cordially embraced, to be the grand *desideratum*, which alone can relieve the mind of man from painful and unavoidable anxieties; inspire it with stable peace and solid hope, and furnish those motives and prospects, which, in the present state of things, are absolutely necessary to produce a conduct worthy of a rational creature, distinguished by a vastness of capacity, which no assemblage of earthly good can satisfy, and by a principle and pre-intimation of immortality.

At a time when hypothesis and conjecture in philosophy are so justly exploded, and little is considered as deserving the name of knowledge, which will not stand the test of experiment, the very use of the term *experimental* in religious concerns, is by too many unhappily rejected with disgust. But we well know, that they who affect to despise the inward feelings which religious persons speak of, and to treat them as enthusiasm and folly, have inward feelings of their own, which, though they would, they cannot suppress. We have been too long in the secret ourselves, to account the proud, the ambitious, or the voluptuous, happy. We must lose the remembrance of what we once were, before we can believe, that a man is satisfied with himself, merely because he endeavours

to appear so. A smile upon the face is often but a mask worn occasionally and in company, to prevent, if possible, a suspicion of what at the same time is passing in the heart. We know that there are people who seldom smile when they are alone ; who, therefore, are glad to hide themselves in a throng from the violence of their own reflections ; and who, while by their looks and their language they wish to persuade us they are happy, would be glad to change their conditions with a dog. But in defiance of all their efforts, they continue to think, forebode, and tremble. This we know, for it has been our own state, and therefore we know how to commiserate it in others.—From this state the Bible relieved us. When we were led to read it with attention, we found *ourselves* described. We learnt the causes of our inquietude—we were directed to a method of relief—we tried, and we were not disappointed.

Deus nobis hæc omnia fecit.

We are now certain, that the Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth. It has reconciled us to God, and to ourselves, to our duty, and our situation. It is the balm and cordial of the present life, and a sovereign antidote against the fear of death.

Sed batenus hec, Some smaller pieces upon less important subjects close the volume. Not one of them I believe was written with a view to publication, but I was unwilling they should be omitted.

JOHN NEWTON.

CHARLES SQUARE, HOXTON,
FEBRUARY 18, 1782.

CONTENTS.

	<i>Page.</i>
TABLE TALK	1
Progress of Error	28
Truth	51
Expostulation	72
Hope	98
Charity	125
Conversation	147
Retirement	170
Diverting History of John Gilpin	206
Verses on the yearly Bill of Mortality in the town of Northampton, 1790	215
To John Johnson	217
To the Rev. John Newton	218
Love abused	218
Epitaph on Mr. Chester	219
do. do. Mrs. M. Higgins	220
To Count Gravina	220
Inscription for a Stone erected at the sowing of a Grove of Oaks	220
do. for a Hermitage in the Author's garden	221
Stanzas on the late indecent liberties taken with the Remains of Milton	222

A Tale	- - - - -	223
A Tale	- - - - -	224
The Four Ages	- - - - -	227
To the Nightingale	- - - - -	229
To a young Friend	- - - - -	230
To William Hayley, Esq.	- - - - -	231
To my Cousin Ann Bodham	- - - - -	231
To Mrs. King	- - - - -	232
Gratitude. To Lady Hesketh	- - - - -	234
Lints on the Authors becoming acquainted with		
William Hayley, Esq.	- - - - -	236
Sonnet	- - - - -	236
Epitaph on Fop	- - - - -	237
To George Romney, Esq.	- - - - -	237
To Dr. Austin	- - - - -	238
Satharina. The second part	- - - - -	239
To Mary	- - - - -	240
The Castaway	- - - - -	242
Lines in Memory of Ashley Cowper, Esq.	- - - - -	244
Versification of a Thought	- - - - -	245
On the shortness of human life	- - - - -	245
Epitaph on Dr. Johnson	- - - - -	246
To a Young Lady on her Birth Day	- - - - -	246
Epitaph on Samuel Rose, Esq.	- - - - -	247
The Colubriad	- - - - -	247
Two Inscriptions	- - - - -	250

BRIEF ACCOUNT
OF
WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ.

.....

MR. COWPER was the son of John Cowper, D. D. Rector of Great Berkhamstead, Herts. He was born on the 15th of November, 1731. Descended of amiable and respectable parents, of noble affinity, and connected with persons of great worldly influence, his advancement in temporal affluence and honour seemed to demand no extraordinary mental endowments. His opening genius discovered, however, a capacity for elegant literature, and he enjoyed the best advantages for improvement in so pleasing a pursuit. With uncommon abilities, he possessed a most amiable temper ; and he became not only the darling of his relations, but beloved and admired by his associates in education ; some of whom, with inferior prospects, have since risen to distinguished reputation, and even to the highest professional rank. But the towering hopes that were naturally built on so flattering a ground, were undermined at an early period. From childhood, during which he

VOL. I.

B

lost a much loved parent, his spirits were always very tender, and often greatly dejected.”*

He was sent to Westminster school preparatory to that course of study which it was de-

—————

* Mr. Cowper appears to have long retained a very tender sense of this dispensation of Providence. We cannot refrain quoting part of a beautiful poem, written by him on receiving his mother's picture out of Norfolk. It exhibits a most amiable pattern of filial affection.

My mother ! when I learn'd that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed ?
Hover'd thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun ?
I heard the bell toll'd on thy burial-day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
And, turning from my nursery window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu.
But was it such ? It was !—Where thou art gone,
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting sound shall pass my lips no more.
Thy maidens griev'd themselves at my concern,
Oft gave me promise of a quick return.
What ardently I wish'd I long believ'd,
And, disappointed still, was still deceiv'd.
By disappointment every day beguil'd,
Dupe of to-morrow, even from a child.
Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
Till, all my stock of infant sorrows spent,
I learn'd, at last, submission to my lot,
And though I less deplor'd thee, ne'er forgot.

signed he should complete at the university.— Here, however, the natural timidity of his temper so much depressed him, that his friends saw the impropriety of attempting to transport him to scenes of augmented turbulence and anxiety ; and they entirely relinquished the plan of sending him to Oxford ; he was, therefore, entered at the Temple in order to prosecute those wishes and hopes which were still indulged by his connexions.

By a certain mode of arrangement, the patent place of clerk of the House of Lords had been reserved for Mr. Cowper ; and to this appointment he was directed to look forward, as a station highly advantageous to himself, and honorable to his family. He had, while at Westminster, become intimate with Edward Thurlow, who was afterwards promoted to the Woolsack ; and, in addition to this, contracted several attachments with characters whose influence might have greatly accelerated his future advancement in the world. It was, therefore, natural that the hopes of his friends should be elevated to a high degree, nor is it surprising that they should suffer themselves to be blinded to those impediments which were likely to disappoint their expectations. Their delusion was not, however, of long duration. No reasonings, no entreaties, could overcome the aversion of Mr. Cowper, for what he denominated public life ; he even solicited madness, as a relief from the importunities of his friends, who, convinced of the folly of any longer persisting against nature and inclination, at length relin-

quished their entreaties, and permitted him to retire into that seclusion, the desire of which was the ruling passion of his breast.

At this crisis appears to have commenced Mr. Cowper's serious attention to the ways of God. Having been educated in the knowledge of the holy scriptures, and preserved from that foolhardy arrogance which urges unhappy youths to infidelity, he had uniformly retained a reverence for the word of God. His manners were in general decent and amiable ; and the course of pleasure, in which he indulged himself, being customary with persons in similar circumstances, he had remained insensible of his state as a sinner in the sight of God. His mind was now, for the first time, convinced of the evil of sin, as a transgression of the law of God. Instead of finding relief from reading, every book he opened, of whatever kind, seemed to him adapted to increase his distress ; which became so pungent as to deprive him of his usual rest, and to render his broken slumbers equally miserable with his waking hours. While in this state, he was visited by the late Rev. Martin Madan, who was related to him. By explaining from the scriptures the doctrine of original sin, Mr. Madan convinced him, that all mankind were on the same level with himself before God ; the atonement and righteousness of Christ were set forth to him, as the remedy which his case required ; and the necessity of faith in Christ, in order to experience the blessings of this salvation, excited his earnest desire for the attainment. These important truths were a temporary source of consolation ; but the next day he sunk into melancholy and despair.

Growing at length, however, familiar with his situation, he suffered it to be alleviated by conversation with Dr. Cotton, a pious and humane physician at St. Alban's, under whose care he had been happily placed. He began to take some pleasure in sharing daily the domestic worship which was laudably practised by the Doctor; and he found relief from his despair, by reading in the scriptures that "God hath set forth Jesus Christ as a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." Rom. iii, 25. While meditating upon this passage, he obtained, in a few minutes, a clear view of the gospel, which was attended with unspeakable joy. Many of his subsequent days were occupied with praise and prayer, and his heart overflowed with love to his crucified Redeemer. A hymn, which he wrote under these delightful impressions, will best describe the comfort he enjoyed. (See No. 48, in Vol. III.)

The first transports of his joy, which almost prevented his necessary sleep, having subsided, were followed by a sweet serenity of spirit, which he was enabled to retain, notwithstanding reviving struggles of corruption. The comfort he enjoyed in the profitable conversation of his beloved physician, induced him to prolong his stay at St. Alban's for twelve months after his recovery. Having determined upon renouncing his profession of the law, he retired to Huntingdon, where he lived in the most intimate friendship with the Rev. Mr. Unwin, to whom he dedicated his *Tirocinium*; and, two or three years afterwards, on the death of Mr.

Unwin, he removed to Olney, in Buckinghamshire, accompanied by that gentleman's widow. Here he contracted a friendship with the Rev. Mr. Newton, (now Rector of St. Mary Woolnorth, London) and indulged, amidst rural scenes, those religious pleasures and occupations which experience had taught him to value far above all that the polite or the busy world could afford. Another of his hymns expresses what he felt when entering on his retirement. (See No. 44, in Vol. III.)

Mr. Cowper's walk with God in private was consistent with the solemnity and fervour of his social engagements. Like the prophet Daniel, and the royal psalmist, he "kneeled three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God" in retirement, beside the regular practice of domestic worship. His mind was stayed upon God ; and, for an unusual course of years, it was kept in perfect peace. The corrupt dispositions, which have so strong a hold upon the human heart, appeared to be peculiarly suppressed in him ; and, when in any degree felt, they were lamented and resisted by him. His *Hymns*, mostly written during this part of his life, describe both the general tenor of his thoughts and their occasional wanderings, with a force of expression dictated by the liveliness of his feelings. While his attainments in the love of God were thus eminent, his christian love to fellow-believers, and to all around him, was highly exemplary. To a conduct void of offence to any individual, and marked with peculiar kindness to all who feared God, was added a beneficence fully proportioned to his ability, and exercised with the greatest modesty and discretion.

The consolation, which, after having endured the severest distress, he at that time derived from a life of faith in the Son of God, who loved him and gave himself for him, he thus describes, in an affecting allegory.

“ I was a stricken deer, that left the herd
Long since, with many an arrow, deep infix'd,
My panting side was charg'd ; when I withdrew
To seek a tranquil death in distant shades,
There was I found by one who had himself
Been hurt by the archers. In his side he bore,
And in his hands and feet, the cruel scars.
With gentle force soliciting the darts,
Hedrew them forth, and heal'd, and bad me live.”

THE TASK, B. III.

The degree and the uninterrupted duration of his spiritual comforts had, perhaps, exceeded the usual experience of pious people. But he now conceived some presentiment of a sad reverse ; and, during a solitary walk in the fields, he composed a hymn, strongly expressive of his sensations. (See No. 32, in Vol. III.) The bright, yet serene lustre, which had usually marked his road, was now succeeded by impenetrable darkness. After the clearest views of the love of God, and the expansion of heart which he had enjoyed in his ways, his mind became obscured, confused and dismayed. That vivid imagination, which often attained the utmost limits of the sphere of reason, did but too easily transgress them ; and his spirits, no longer sustained upon the wings of faith and hope, sunk, with their weight of natural depression, into the abyss of despair. In this state his mind became fixed ; yet he ever cherished an unshaken submission to what he imagined the Divine pleasure.

Gradually habituated as at a former period, to his situation, he became accessible to a few intimate friends in succession, who laboured to excite his thoughts to activity on different subjects. Thus originated most of those Poems, which, when published, charmed and surprised both the literary and religious world. Some times his mind was led so far from his distress, as to indulge in playful essays ; but these intervals were extremely transient. In general his Poems are the evident dictates of that reverence for God, that esteem for the Gospel, and that benevolence toward fellow-creatures, which characterized his familiar conversation.

Of the general condition of his mind, during the last seven years of his abode in the vicinity of Olney, which certainly were the most tranquil that he passed in the latter part of his life, the best judgment may be formed from his own expressions, in a poem written towards the close of that interval, part of which we have already quoted. It was occasioned by the unexpected acquisition of a small portrait of his mother, whom he had lost more than half a century before, but had never ceased to remember with the warmest gratitude and the fondest affection. Having described her's and his father's passage through this life to a heavenly world, under the figure of a voyage speedily terminated, he naturally reverts, in the same metaphorical language, to the distressing contrast which his own situation and prospects presented.

“ But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distress'd,—
Me howling winds drive devious, tempest-toss'd,
Sails ript, seams opening wide, and compass lost :

And, day by day, some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosperous course.
But, oh ! that thou art safe, and he !
That thought is joy, arrive what may to me."

The principal pleasure that he appeared capable of receiving was, indeed, that which he derived from the happiness of others. Instead of being provoked to discontent and envy, by contrasting their comforts with his own afflictions, there evidently was not a benefit that he knew to be enjoyed by others, which did not afford him sensible satisfaction ; not a suffering they endured that did not add to his pain. To the happiness of those who were privileged with opportunities of shewing their esteem for him, he was most tenderly alive. The advancement of the knowledge of Christ in the world at large was always near his heart ; and whatever concerned the general welfare of mankind was interesting to him, secluded as he was from the public, and, in common, from religious society. In like manner, from his distant retreat, he viewed, with painful sensations, the progress of infidelity, and of sin in every shape. His love to God, though unassisted by a cheerful hope of divine favour, was invariably manifested by an abhorrence of every thing that he thought dishonourable to the Most High, and a delight in all that tended to his glory.

Mr. Cowper was latterly under the care of his affectionate and intelligent young relative, the Rev. John Johnson, who, during the last year or two of his life, had sometimes indulged the hope of witnessing his complete restoration to health. Suddenly, however, this expectation was fatally disappointed ; and towards the close

of 1799, it became sufficiently evident that he could not successfully contend with the ravages of a rapid decay ; that, ere long, the mortal must put on immortality. Conscious of the speedy approach of this important change, however agonizing to himself, Mr. Johnson unremittingly exercised that attention which Young so truly describes as—

—The dreadful post of observation,
Darker every hour.

On the 25th of April, 1800, friendship was at length discharged from these afflicting duties, and its object happily released from this scene of suffering and sorrow. Early on the morning of that day, Mr. Cowper sunk into a state of such apparent insensibility, that, had not his eyes remained half open, it might have been conjectured a tranquil slumber. In this situation—his respiration regular, though feeble ; his countenance and frame perfectly serene—he continued about twelve hours, when he expired without heaving his breath.

To the preceding remarks, on the life of Cowper may be added the following modest and characteristic epitome, drawn by himself in a letter to a literary friend, dated March the 10th, 1792. “ You are in danger, I perceive,” says he, of “ thinking of me more highly than you ought to think. I am not one of the Literati, among whom you seem disposed to place me ;—far from it. I told you how heinously I am unprovided with the means of being so, having long since sent all my books to market. My learning accordingly lies in a very narrow compass. It is school-boy learning somewhat improved, and very little more. From the age of

20 to 33, I was occupied, or ought to have been, in the study of the law. From 33 to 60 I have spent my time in the country, where my reading has been only an apology for idleness, and where, when I had not either a magazine or a review in my hand, I was sometimes a carpenter, at others, a bird-cage maker, or a gardener, or a drawer of landscapes. At 50 years of age I commenced an author. It is a whim that has served me longest and best, and which will probably be my last. Thus you see I have had very little opportunity to become what is properly called—learned. In truth, having given myself so entirely of late to poetry, I am not sorry for this deficiency ; since great learning, I have been sometimes inclined to suspect, is rather a hindrance to the fancy than a furtherance.”

THE Writings of Cowper, though not voluminous, are yet such as have secured to their author no mean rank among the standard poets of his country ;—an elevation not at this day attainable, without sound and prominent excellence.

The first volume of poems which he published consists of various pieces, on various subjects. It seems that he had been assiduous in cultivating a turn for grave and argumentative versification on moral and ethical topics. Of this kind is the Table Talk, and several other pieces in the collection.

The lighter poems are well known. Of these the verses supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk, on the island of Juan Fernandes, are in high estimation. It would be absurd to give one general character of the pieces that were

published in this volume ; yet this is true concerning Mr. Cowper's productions ; that in all the varieties of his style, there may still be discerned the likeness of the same mind ; the same unaffected modesty, which always rejects unseasonable ambitions and ornaments of language. He understands the whole science of numbers, and he has practised their different kinds with considerable happiness : and if his verses do not flow so swiftly as the delicacy of a modern ear requires, that roughness, which is objected to his poetry, is his choice, not his defect. But this sort of critics, who admire only what is exquisitely polished, these lovers of "gentleness without sinews," ought to take into their estimate that vast effusion of thought, which is so abundantly poured over the writings of Mr. Cowper, without which human discourse is only an idle combination of sounds and syllables.

What has, however, peculiarly given to Cowper the character of a poet is the Task. Though the occasion that gave birth to it was a trivial one, yet he expanded the performance into one of the finest moral poems of which the English language has been productive.

It is written in blank verse, of which the construction, though in some respects resembling Milton's, is truly original and characteristic. It is not too stately for familiar description, nor too depressed for sublime and elevated imagery. If it has any fault, it is that of being too much laden with idiomatic expression, a fault which the author, in the rapidity with which his ideas and his utterance seemed to have flowed, very naturally incurred.

In this poem his fancy ran with the most ex-cursive freedom. The poet enlarges upon his topics, and confirms his argument by every variety of illustration. He never, however, dwells upon them too long, but leaves off in such a manner, that it seems it was in his power to have said more.

The arguments of the poem are various. The works of nature, the associations with which they exhibit themselves, the designs of Providence, and the passions of men. Of one advantage the writer as amply availed himself. The work not being rigidly confined to any precise subject, he has indulged himself in all the freedom of a miscellaneous poem. Yet he has still adhered so faithfully to the general laws of congruity, that whether he inspires the softer affections into his reader, or delights him with keen and playful raillery, or discourses on ordinary manners, or holds up the bright pictures of religious consolation to his mind, he adopts at pleasure a diction just and appropriate, equal in elevation to the sacred effusions of Christian rapture, and sufficiently easy and familiar for descriptions of domestic life ; skilful alike in soaring without effort, and descending without meanness.

He who desires to put into the hands of youth a poem, which, not destitute of poetical embellishment, is free from all licentious tendency, will find in the Task a book adapted to his purpose. Here all is grave, and majestic, and moral. A vein of religious thinking pervades every page ; and he discourses, in a strain of the most finished poetry, on the insufficiency and vanity of human pursuits.

Nor is he always severe. He is perpetually enlivening the mind of his reader by sportive descriptions. The Task abounds with incidents, introduced as episodes, and interposing an agreeable relief to the grave and serious parts of the poetry. Who has not admired his Crazy Kate? A description, in which the calamity of a disordered reason is painted with admirable exactness and simplicity.

“ She begs an idle pin of all she meets.”

Perhaps no poet would have introduced so minute a circumstance into his representation; yet it derives its effect altogether from the minuteness with which it is drawn.

The next work which Mr. Cowper published, was a translation of the Iliad, and the Odyssey. The design was worthy of his talents. His object was to present the father of poesy to the English reader, not in English habiliments and modern attire, but in the graceful and antique habit of his own times. He, therefore, adopted blank verse to avoid the restrictions which rhyme imposes.

It is foolish to compare the translation of Pope with that of Cowper. The merits of each are distinct. Pope has exhibited Homer as he would have sung had he been born in England. Cowper has attempted to pourtray him as he wrote in Greece, adhering frequently to the peculiarities of his own idiom, and endeavoring to preserve his strength and energy, as well as his harmony and smoothness.

THE following extracts from Mr. Cowper's letters, written to his cousin, Mrs. Cowper, are given as a specimen of the Christian temper by which he was habitually influenced. The first gives a brief account of his conversion, and clearly demonstrates that he considered man in his natural state as actuated by a heart of enmity against God, and that his recovery from that state is alone by Christ's atonement, applied to the soul by faith. The second evidences that his religion disposed him to spend his time in the service, and to the glory of his Redeemer, and that he contemned the fashionable methods of murdering time by vain amusements. In the third, his evangelical principles are plainly declared, and the influence of them manifested in his determinate choice to be devoted to God, though the consequence were the world's disapprobation. The fourth discovers a holy sympathy with his religious friends in trouble, and shows that he knew how to direct them to the only solid source of comfort. In the fifth is an account of the motives which induced him to write and publish his poems, and his desire that they might be useful in the reformation of a dissolute age.

(No. 1.)

" I would discourage in myself upon all occasions, even a pride that felt itself hurt upon a mere suspicion of neglect. I have so much

ause for humility, and so much need of it too, and every little sneaking resentment is such an enemy to it, that I hope I shall never give quarter to any thing that appears in the shape of sullenness or self-consequence hereafter. Alas ! if my best friend, who laid down his life for me, were to remember all the instances, in which I have neglected him, and to plead them against me in judgment, where should I hide my guilty head in the day of recompense ? I will pray, therefore, for blessings upon my friends, even though they cease to be so, and upon my enemies, though they continue such. The deceitfulness of the natural heart is inconceivable : I know well that I passed upon my friends for a person at least religiously inclined, if not actually religious ; and what is more wonderful, I thought myself a Christian when I had no faith in Christ, when I saw no beauty in him, that I should desire him ; in short when I had neither faith nor love, nor any Christian grace whatever, but a thousand seeds of rebellion instead, ever more springing up in enmity against him. But blessed be God, even the God who is become my salvation. The hail of affliction and rebuke for sin has swept away the refuge of lies. It pleased the Almighty in great mercy to set all my misdeeds before me. At length, the storm being past, a quiet and peaceful serenity of soul succeeded, such as ever attends the gift of lively faith in the all sufficient atonement, and the sweet sense of mercy and pardon purchased by the blood of Christ. Thus did he break me and bind me up ; thus did he wound me, and his hands made me whole. My dear

cousin, I make no apology for entertaining you with the history of my conversion, because I know you to be a Christian in the sterling import of the appellation. This is however but a very summary account of the matter ; neither would a letter contain the astonishing particulars of it. If we ever meet again in this world, I will relate them to you by word of mouth ; if not, they will serve for the subject of a conference in the next, where I doubt not I shall remember and record them with a gratitude better suited to the subject."

April 17, 1766.

(No. 2.)

" As to amusements, I mean what the world calls such, we have none ; the place, indeed, swarms with them, and cards and dancing are the professed business of almost all the *gentle* inhabitants of Huntingdon. We refuse to take part in them, or to be accessaries to this way of murdering our time, and by so doing, have acquired the name of Methodists. Having told you how we *do not* spend our time, I will next say how we do. We breakfast commonly between eight and nine ; till eleven, we read either the Scripture, or the sermons of some faithful preacher of these holy mysteries ; at eleven, we attend divine service, which is performed here twice every day, and from twelve to three, we separate, and amuse ourselves as we please. During that interval I either read in my own apartment, or walk, or ride, or work in the garden. We seldom sit an hour after din-

ner, but if the weather permits adjourn to the garden, where, with Mrs. Unwin and her son, I have generally the pleasure of religious conversation till tea time ! If it rains, or is too windy for walking, we either converse within doors, or sing some devotional hymns, and by the help of Mrs. Unwin's harpsichord make up a tolerable concert, in which our hearts, I hope, are the best and most musical performers. After tea we sally forth to walk in good earnest. Mrs. Unwin is a good walker, and we have generally travelled about four miles before we see home again. When the days are short, we make this excursion in the former part of the day, between church time and dinner. At night we read and converse as before till supper, and commonly finish the evening either with hymns or a sermon and last of all the family are called to prayers. I need not tell *you*, that such a life as this is consistent with the utmost cheerfulness ; accordingly, we are all happy, and dwell together in unity as brethren. Mrs. Unwin has almost a maternal affection for me, and I have something very like a filial one for her ; and her son and I are brothers. Blessed be the God of our salvation for such companions, and for such a life ; above all, for an heart to like it.

“ I have had many anxious thoughts about taking orders, and I believe every new convert is apt to think himself called upon for that purpose ; but it has pleased God, by means which there is no need to particularize, to give me full satisfaction as to the propriety of declining it ; indeed, they who have the least idea of what I have suffered from the dread of public exhibi-

tions, will really excuse my never attempting them hereafter. In the mean time, if it please the Almighty, I may be an instrument of turning many to the truth in a private way, and hope that my endeavours in this way have not been entirely unsuccessful. Had I the zeal of Moses, I should want an Aaron to be my spokes-man."

Huntingdon, Oct. 20, 1766.

(No. 3.)

"To find those whom I love clearly and strongly persuaded of evangelical truth, gives me a pleasure superior to any that this world can afford me. Judge then, whether your letter, in which the body and substance of a saving faith is so evidently set forth, could meet with a lukewarm reception at my hands, or be entertained with indifference! Would you know the true reason of my long silence? Conscious that my religious principles are generally excepted against, and that the conduct they produce wherever they are heartily maintained, is still more the object of disapprobation than those principles themselves, and remembering that I had made both the one and the other known to you, without having any clear assurance that our faith in Jesus was of the same stamp and character, I could not help thinking it possible that you might disapprove both my sentiments and practice; that you might think the one unsupported by Scripture, and the other whimsical, and unnecessarily strict and rigorous; and

consequently would be rather pleased with the suspension of a correspondence which a different way of thinking upon so momentous a subject as that we wrote upon was likely to render tedious and irksome to you.

“ I have told you the truth from my heart ; forgive me these injurious suspicions, and never imagine that I shall hear from you upon this delightful theme without a real joy, or without a prayer to God to prosper you in the way of his truth, his sanctifying and saving truth. The book you mention lies now upon my table. Marshal is an old acquaintance of mine ; I have both read him, and heard him read with pleasure and edification. The doctrines he maintains are, under the influence of the Spirit of Christ, the very life of my soul, and the soul of all my happiness ; that Jesus is a *present* Saviour from the guilt of sin by his most precious blood, and from the power of it by his spirit ; that corrupt and wretched in ourselves, in Him, and in *Him only*, we are complete ; that being united to Jesus by a lively faith, we have a solid and eternal interest in his obedience and sufferings, to justify us before the face of our heavenly Father, and that all this inestimable treasure, the earnest of which is in grace, and its consummation in glory, is given, freely *given* to us of God ; in short, that he hath opened the kingdom of heaven *to all believers*. These are the truths which, by the grace of God, shall ever be dearer to me than life itself ; shall ever be placed next my heart as the throne whereon the Saviour himself shall sit, to sway all its motions, and reduce that world of iniquity and rebellion to a state of filial and af-

fectionate obedience to the will of the Most Holy.

"These, my dear cousin, are the truths to which by nature we are enemies—they debase the sinner, and exalt the Saviour, to a degree which the pride of our hearts (till almighty grace subdues them) is determined never to allow. May the Almighty reveal his Son in our hearts continually more and more, and teach us to increase in love towards him continually, for having given us the unspeakable riches of Christ."

March 11, 1767.

(No. 4.)

"A letter from your brother Frederic brought me yesterday the most afflicting intelligence that has reached me these many years. I pray to God to comfort you, and to enable you to sustain this heavy stroke with that resignation to his will, which none but Himself can give, and which he gives to none but his own children. How blessed and happy is your lot, my dear friend, beyond the common lot of the greater part of mankind ; that you know what it is to draw near to God in prayer, and are acquainted with a throne of grace ! You have resources in the infinite love of a dear Redeemer, which are withheld from millions : and the promises of God, which are yea and amen in Jesus, are sufficient to answer all your necessities, and to sweeten the bitterest cup which

your heavenly Father will ever put into your hand. May He now give you liberty to drink at these wells of salvation, till you are filled with consolation and peace in the midst of trouble. He has said, when thou passest through the fire, I will be with thee, and when through the floods, they shall not overflow thee. You have need of such a word as this, and he knows your need of it, and the time of necessity is the time when he will be sure to appear in behalf of those who trust him. I bear you and yours upon my heart before him night and day, for I never expect to hear of a distress which shall call upon me with a louder voice to pray for the sufferer. I know the Lord hears me for myself, vile and sinful as I am, and believe, and am sure, that he will hear me for you also. He is the Friend of the widow, and the Father of the fatherless, even God in his holy habitation; in all our afflictions he is afflicted, and chastens us in mercy. Surely he will sanctify this dispensation to you; do you great and everlasting good by it; make the world appear like dust and vanity in your sight, as it truly is, and open to your view the glories of a better country, where there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor pain, but God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes forever. Oh that comfortable word! "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction," so that our very sorrows are evidences of our calling, and he chastens us because we are children.

"My dear cousin, I commit you to the word of his grace, and to the comforts of his Holy Spirit. Your life is needful for your family: may God in mercy to them prolong it, and may

he preserve you from the dangerous effects which a stroke like this might have upon a frame so tender as yours.—I grieve with you ; I pray for you ; could I do more, I would, but God must comfort you.”

Olney, Aug. 31, 1769.

(No. 5.)

“ It is a bold undertaking at this time of day, when so many writers of the greatest abilities have gone before, who seem to have anticipated every valuable subject, as well as all the graces of poetical embellishment, to step forth into the world in the character of a bard, especially when it is considered that luxury, idleness and vice have debauched the public taste, and that nothing hardly is welcome, but childish fiction, or what has at least a tendency to excite a laugh. I thought, however, that I had stumbled upon some subjects that had never before been poetically treated, and upon some others, to which I imagined it would not be difficult to give an air of novelty, by the manner of treating them. My sole drift is to be useful : a point which, however, I knew I should in vain aim at, unless I could be likewise entertaining. I have therefore fixed these two strings upon my bow, and by the help of both have done my best to send my arrow to the mark. My readers will hardly have begun to laugh, before they will be called upon to correct that levity, and peruse me with

a more serious air. As to the effect, I leave it alone in His hands who can alone produce it ; neither prose nor verse can reform the manners of a dissolute age ; much less can they inspire a sense of religious obligation, unless assisted and made efficacious by the Power who superintends the truth he has vouchsafed to impart."

October 19, 1781.

POEMS.

TABLE TALK.

Si te fortè mee gravis uret sarcina charta, Abjicito.

HOR. lib. 1. epist. 13.

A. **Y**OU told me, I remember, glory, built
On selfish principles, is shame and guilt ;
The deeds, that men admire as half divine,
Stark naught, because corrupt in their design !
Strange doctrine this, that without scruple tears
The laurel that the very lightning spares ;
Brings down the warrior's trophy to the dust,
And eats into his bloody sword like rust.

B. I grant that, men continuing what they are,
Fierce, avaricious, proud, there must be war ;
And never meant the rule should be applied
To him that fights with justice on his side.

Let laurels, drench'd in pure Parnassian dews,
Reward his memory, dear to every muse,
Who, with a courage of unshaken root,
In honour's field advancing his firm foot,

VOL. I.

▲

Plants it upon the line that justice draws,
And will prevail, or perish in her cause.
'Tis to the virtues of such men man owes
His portion in the good that Heaven bestows,
And when recording history displays
Feats of renown, though wrought in ancient days;
Tells of a few stout hearts, that fought and died
Where duty plac'd them, at their country's side;
The man that is not mov'd with what he reads,
That takes not fire at their heroic deeds,
Unworthy of the blessings of the brave,
Is base in kind, and born to be a slave.

But let eternal infamy pursue
The wretch, to naught but his ambition true;
Who, for the sake of filling with one blast
The post-horns of all Europe, lays her waste.
Think yourself station'd on a towering rock,
To see a people scatter'd like a flock,
Some royal mastiff panting at their heels,
With all the savage thirst a tiger feels;
Then view him, self-proclaim'd, in a gazette,
Chief monster that has plagu'd the nations yet!
The globe and sceptre in such hands misplac'd,
Those ensigns of dominion, how disgrac'd!
The glass that bids man mark the fleeting hour,
And death's own scythe, would better speak his power;
Then grace the bony phantom in their stead,
With the king's shoulder-knot and gay cockade;
Clothe the twin brethren in each other's dress,
The same their occupation and success,

A. 'Tis your belief the world was made for man ;
Kings do but reason on the self same plan ;
Maintaining yours, you cannot theirs condemn,
Who think, or seem to think, man made for them.

B. Seldom, alas ! the power of logic reigns
With much sufficiency in royal brains ;
Such reasoning falls like an inverted cone,
Wanting its proper base to stand upon.
Man made for kings ! those optics are but dim
That tell you so—say, rather, they for him.
That were, indeed, a king-ennobling thought,
Could they, or would they, reason as they ought.
The diadem, with mighty projects lin'd,
To catch renown by ruining mankind,
Is worth, with all its gold and glittering store,
Just what the toy will sell for, and no more.

Oh ! bright occasions of dispensing good,
How seldom us'd, how little understood !
To pour in virtue's lap her just reward,
Keep vice restrain'd behind a double guard ;
To quell the faction that affronts the throne,
By silent magnanimity alone :
To nurse with tender care the thriving arts,
Watch every beam philosophy imparts ;
To give religion her unbridled scope,
Nor judge by statute a believer's hope ;
With close fidelity and love unfeign'd,
To keep the matrimonial bond unstain'd ;
Covetous only of a virtuous praise ;
His life a lesson to the land he sways :

To touch the sword with conscientious awe,
 Nor draw it but when duty bids him draw ;
 To sheath it in the peace-restoring close
 With joy beyond what victory bestows ;
 Blest country, where these kingly glories shine !
 Blest England, if this happiness be thine !

A. Guard what you say ; the patriotic tribe
 Will sneer, and charge you with a bribe.—*B.* A bribe ?
 The worth of his three kingdoms I defy,
 'To lure me to the baseness of a lie.
 And, of all lies, (be that one poet's boast)
 The lie that flatters I abhor the most.
 Those arts be theirs who hate his gentle reign,
 But he that loves him has no need to feign.

A. Your smooth eulogium, to one crown address'd,
 Seems to imply a censure on the rest.

B. Quevedo, as he tells his sober tale,
 Ask'd, when in hell, to see the royal jail ;
 Approv'd their method in all other things ;
 But where, good Sir, do you confine your kings ?
 There—said his guide—the groupe is full in view.
 Indeed ?—replied the Don—there are but few.
 His black interpreter the charge disdain'd—
 Few, fellow ?—there are all that ever reign'd.
 Wit, undistinguishing, is apt to strike
 The guilty and not guilty, both alike.
 I grant the sarcasm is too severe,
 And we can readily refute it here ;

While Alfred's name, the father of his age,
And the sixth Edward's, grace th' historic page.

A. Kings then, at last, have but the lot of all,
By their own conduct they must stand or fall.

B. True. While they live the courtly laureat pays
His quit-rent ode, his pepper-corn of praise ;
And many a dunce, whose fingers itch to write,
Adds, as he can, his tributary mite :
A subject's faults a subject may proclaim,
A monarch's errors are forbidden game !
Thus, free from censure, over-aw'd by fear,
And prais'd for virtues that they scorn to wear,
The fleeting forms of majesty engage
Respect, while stalking o'er life's narrow stage ;
Then leave their crimes for history to scan,
And ask, with busy scorn, Was this the man ?

I pity kings, whom worship waits upon,
Obsequious, from the cradle to the throne ;
Before whose infant eyes the flatterer bows,
And binds a wreath about their baby brows !
Whom education stiffens into state,
And death awakens from that dream too late.
Oh ! if servility with supple knees,
Whose trade it is to smile, to crouch, to please ;
If smooth dissimulation, skill'd to grace
A devil's purpose with an angel's face ;
If smiling peeresses and simpering peers,
Encompassing his throne a few short years ;

If the gilt carriage and the pamper'd steed,
 That wants no driving, and disdains the lead ;
 If guards, mechanically form'd in ranks,
 Playing, at beat of drum, their martial pranks,
 Should'ring and standing as if stuck to stone,
 While condescending majesty looks on ;
 If monarchy consist in such base things,
 Sighing, I say again, I pity kings !

To be suspected, thwarted, and withstood,
 Even when he labours for his country's good ;
 To see a band, call'd patriot, for no cause,
 But that they catch at popular applause,
 Careless of all th' anxiety he feels,
 Hook disappointment on the public wheels ;
 With all their flippant fluency of tongue,
 Most confident, when palpably most wrong ;
 If this be kingly, then farewell for me
 All kingship ! and may I be poor and free !

To be the Table Talk of clubs up stairs,
 To which th' unwash'd artificer repairs,
 T' indulge his genius after long fatigue,
 By diving into cabinet intrigue ;
 (For what kings deem a toil, as well they may,
 To him is relaxation and mere play)
 To win no praise when well-wrought plans prevail,
 But to be rudely censur'd when they fail ;
 To doubt the love his favorites may pretend,
 And in reality to find no friend ;

If he indulge a cultivated taste,
 His galleries with the works of art well grac'd,
 To hear it call'd extravagance and waste ;
 If these attendants, and if such as these,
 Must follow royalty, then welcome ease ;
 However humble and confin'd the sphere,
 Happy the state that has not these to fear.

A. Thus men, whose thoughts contemplative have
 On situations that they never felt, [dwelt
 Start up sagacious, covered with the dust
 Of dreaming study and pedantic rust,
 And prate and preach about what others prove,
 As if the world and they were hand and glove.
 Leave kingly backs to cope with kingly cares,
 They have their weight to carry—subjects theirs ;
 Poets, of all men, ever least regret
 Increasing taxes, and the nation's debt.
 Could you contrive the payment, and rehearse
 The mighty plan, oracular, in verse,
 No bard, howe'er majestic, old or new,
 Should claim my fix'd attention more than you.

B. Not Brindley nor Bridgewater would essay
 To turn the course of Helicon that way ;
 Nor would the Nine consent the sacred tide
 Should purl amidst the traffic of Cheapside,
 Or tinkle in 'Change-Alley, to amuse
 The leathern ears of stock-jobbers and Jews.

A. Vouchsafe, at least, to pitch the key of rhyme
 To themes more pertinent, if less sublime.

When ministers and ministerial arts ;
 Patriots, who love good places at their hearts ;
 When admirals, extoll'd for standing still,
 Or doing nothing with a deal of skill ;
 Generals, who will not conquer when they may,
 Firm friends to peace, to pleasure, and good pay ;
 When freedom, wounded almost to despair,
 Though discontent alone can find out where ;
 When themes like these employ the poet's tongue,
 I hear as mute as if a syren sung.
 Or tell me, if you can, what power maintains
 A Briton's scorn of arbitrary chains.
 That were a theme might animate the dead,
 And move the lips of poets cast in lead.

B. The cause, though worth the search, may yet elude
 Conjecture and remark, however shrewd.
 They take, perhaps, a well directed aim,
 Who seek it in his climate and his frame.
 Liberal in all things else, yet nature, here,
 With stern severity deals out the year.
 Winter invades the spring, and often pours
 A chilling flood on summer's drooping flowers ;
 Unwelcome vapours quench autumnal beams,
 Ungenial blasts attending curl the streams ;
 The peasants urge their harvest, ply the fork
 With double toil, and shiver at their work ;
 Thus with a rigour, for his good design'd,
 She rears her favourite man of all mankind.
 His form robust, and of elastic tone,
 Proportion'd well, half muscle and half bone,

Supplies with warm activity and force
A mind well lodg'd, and masculine of course.
Hence liberty, sweet liberty inspires
And keeps alive his fierce but noble fires.
Patient of constitutional control,
He bears it with meek manliness of soul ;
But if authority grow wanton, woe
To him that treads upon his free-born toe ;
One step beyond the boundary of the laws
Fires him at once in freedom's glorious cause.
Thus proud prerogative, not much rever'd,
Is seldom felt, though sometimes seen and heard ;
And in his cage, like parrot fine and gay,
Is kept to strut, look big, and talk away.

Born in a climate softer far than ours,
Not form'd like us with such Herculean powers,
The Frenchman, easy, debonair, and brisk,
Give him his lass, his fiddle, and his frisk,
Is always happy, reign whoever may,
And laughs the sense of misery far away ;
He drinks his simple beverage with a gust ;
And, feasting on an onion and a crust,
We never feel th' alacrity and joy
With which he shouts and carols—*Vive le Roy*,
Fill'd with as much true merriment and glee,
As if he heard his king say—Slave, be free.

Thus happiness depends, as nature shows,
Less on exterior things than most suppose.

Vigilant over all that he has made,
Kind Providence attends with gracious aid ;
Bids equity throughout his works prevail,
And weighs the nations in an even scale ;
He can encourage slavery to a smile,
And fill with discontent a British isle.

A. Freeman and slave, then, if the case be such,
Stand on a level ; and you prove too much :
If all men indiscriminately share
His fostering power, and tutelary care,
As well be yok'd by despotism's hand,
As dwell at large in Britain's charter'd land.

B. No. Freedom has a thousand charms to show,
That slaves, howe'er contented, never know.
The mind attains, beneath her happy reign,
The growth that nature meant she should attain ;
The varied fields of science, ever new,
Opening and wider opening on her view,
She ventures onward with a prosperous force,
While no base fear impedes her in her course :
Religion, richest favour of the skies,
Stands most reveal'd before the freeman's eyes ;
No shades of superstition blot the day,
Liberty chases all that gloom away ;
The soul, emancipated, unoppress'd,
Free to prove all things, and hold fast the best,
Learns much ; and, to a thousand listening minds,
Communicates with joy the good she finds ;

Valiant in arms, and ever prompt to show
His manly forehead to the fiercest foe ;
Glorious in war, but for the sake of peace,
His spirits rising as his toils increase,
Guards well what arts and industry have won,
And freedom claims him for her first-born son.
Slaves fight for what were better cast away—
The chain that binds them, and a tyrant's sway ;
But they, that fight for freedom, undertake
The noblest cause mankind can have at stake :
Religion, virtue, truth, whate'er we call
A blessing—freedom is the pledge of all.
O liberty ! the prisoner's pleasing dream,
The poet's muse, his passion, and his theme ;
Genius is thine, and thou art fancy's nurse ;
Lost, without thee, th' ennobling powers of verse ;
Heroic song, from thy free touch, acquires
Its clearest tone, the rapture it inspires ;
Place me where winter breathes his keenest air,
And I will sing, if liberty be there ;
And I will sing, at liberty's dear feet,
In Afric's torrid clime, or India's fiercest heat.

A. Sing where you please ; in such a cause I grant
An English poet's privilege to rant ;
But is not freedom—at least, is not ours
Too apt to play the wanton with her powers,
Grow freakish, and, o'erleaping every mound,
Spread anarchy and terror all around ?

B. Agreed. But, would you sell or slay your horse,
For bounding and curvetting in his course ;

Or if, when ridden with a careless rein,
He break away, and seek the distant plain ?
No. His high mettle, under good control,
Gives him Olympic speed, and shoots him to the goal.

Let discipline employ her wholesome arts ;
Let magistrates alert perform their parts,
Not skulk or put on a prudential mask,
As if their duty were a desperate task ;
Let active laws apply the needful curb,
To guard the peace that riot would disturb ;
And liberty, preserv'd from wild excess,
Shall raise no feuds for armies to suppress.
When tumult lately burst his prison door,
And set plebeian thousands in a roar ;
When he usurp'd authority's just place,
And dar'd to look his master in the face ;
When the rude rabble's watch-word was—destroy,
And blazing London seem'd a second Troy ;
Liberty blush'd, and hung her drooping head,
Beheld their progress with the deepest dread ;
Blush'd that effects like these she should produce,
Worse than the deeds of galley-slaves broke loose.
She loses, in such storms, her very name,
And fierce licentiousness should bear the blame.

Incomparable gem ! thy worth untold ; [sold ;
Cheap, though blood bought ; and thrown away when
May no foes ravish thee, and no false friend
Betray thee, while professing to defend ;
Prize it, ye ministers ; ye monarchs, spare ;
Ye patriots, guard it with a miser's care.

A. Patriots, alas ! the few that have been found,
Where most they flourish, upon English ground,
The country's need have scantily supplied,
And the last left the scene when Chatham died.

B. Not so—the virtue still adorns our age,
Though the chief actor died upon the stage.
In him Demosthenes was heard again ;
Liberty taught him her Athenian strain ;
She cloth'd him with authority and awe,
Spoke from his lips, and in his looks gave law.
His speech, his form, his action, full of grace,
And all his country beaming in his face,
He stood, as some inimitable hand
Would strive to make a Paul or Tully stand.
No sycophant or slave, that dar'd oppose
Her sacred cause, but trembled when he rose ;
And every venal stickler for the yoke
Felt himself crush'd at the first word he spoke.

Such men are rais'd to station and command,
When Providence means mercy to a land.
He speaks, and they appear ; to him they owe
Skill to direct, and strength to strike the blow
To manage with address, to seize with power,
The crisis of a dark, decisive hour.

So Gideon earn'd a victory not his own ;
Subserviency his praise, and that alone.

Poor England ! thou art a devoted deer,
Beset with every ill but that of fear.

The nations hunt ; all mark thee for a prey ;
They swarm around thee, and thou stand'st at bay.
Undaunted still though wearied and perplex'd,
Once Chatham sav'd thee ; but who saves thee next ?
Alas ! the tide of pleasure sweeps along
All that should be the boast of British song.
'Tis not the wreath that once adorn'd thy brow,
The prize of happier times, will serve thee now.
Our ancestry ; a gallant Christian race,
Patterns of every virtue, every grace,
Confess'd a God ; they kneel'd before they fought,
And prais'd him in the victories he wrought.
Now, from the dust of ancient days, bring forth
Their sober zeal, integrity, and worth ;
Courage, ungrac'd by these, affronts the skies,
Is but the fire without the sacrifice.
The stream that feeds the well-spring of the heart
Not more invigorates life's noblest part,
Than virtue quickens, with a warmth divine,
The powers that sin has brought to a decline.

A. Th' inestimable estimate of Brown
Rose like a paper-kite, and charm'd the town ;
But measures, plann'd and executed well,
Shifted the wind that rais'd it, and it fell.
He trod the very self-same ground you tread,
And victory refuted all he said.

B. And yet his judgment was not fram'd amiss ;
Its error, if it err'd, was merely this—
He thought the dying hour already come,
And a complete recovery struck him dumb.

But, that effeminacy, folly, lust,
Enervate and enfeeble, and needs must ;
And that a nation, shamefully debas'd,
Will be despis'd and trampled on at last,
Unless sweet penitence her powers renew,
Is truth, if history itself be true.
There is a time, and justice marks the date,
For long forbearing clemency to wait ;
That hour elaps'd, th' incurable revolt
Is punish'd, and down comes the thunder-bolt.
If mercy *then* put by the threatening blow,
Must she perform the same kind office *now* ?
May she ! and, if offended Heaven be still
Accessible, and prayer prevail, she will.
'Tis not however insolence and noise,
The tempest of tumultuary joys,
Nor is it, yet, despondence and dismay,
Will win her visits or engage her stay ;
Prayer only, and the penitential tear,
Can call her smiling down and fix her here.

But, when a country (one that I could name)
In prostitution sinks the sense of shame ;
When infamous venality, grown bold,
Writes on his bosom—*To be let or sold* ;
When perjury, that heaven-defying vice,
Sells oaths by tale, and at the lowest price ;
Stamps God's own name upon a lie just made,
To turn a penny in the way of trade ;
When avarice starves (and never hides his face)
Two or three millions of the human race,

And not a tongue inquires, how, where, or when,
Though conscience will have twinges now and then ;
When profanation of the sacred cause,
In all its parts, times, ministry and laws,
Bespeaks a land, once Christian, fallen and lost
In all that wars against that title most ;
What follows next, let cities of great name,
And regions, long since desolate, proclaim.
Nineveh, Babylon, and ancient Rome,
Speak to the present times, and times to come ;
They cry aloud in every careless ear,
Stop, while you may ; suspend your mad career :
O learn from our example and our fate,
Learn wisdom and repentance ere too late.

Not only vice disposes and prepares
The mind, that slumbers sweetly in her snares,
To stoop to tyranny's usurp'd command,
And bend her polish'd neck beneath his hand,
(A dire effect, by one of nature's laws
Unchangeably connected with its cause ;)
But Providence himself will intervene,
To throw his dark displeasure o'er the scene.
All are his instruments ; each form of war,
What burns at home or threatens from afar,
Nature in arms, her elements at strife,
The storms that upset the joys of life,
Are but his rods to scourge a guilty land,
And waste it at the bidding of his hand.
He gives the word, and mutiny soon roars
In all her gates, and shakes her distant shores ;

The standards of all nations are unfurl'd ;
She has one foe, and that one foe the world.
And, if he doom that people with a frown,
And mark them with a seal of wrath press'd down,
Obduracy takes place : callous and tough,
The reprobated race grows judgment proof :
Earth shakes beneath them and heaven roars above ;
But nothing scares them from the course they love :
To the lascivious pipe and wanton song,
That charm down fear, they frolic it along,
With mad rapidity and unconcern,
Down to the gulf from which is no return.
They trust in navies, and their navies fail—
God's curse can cast away ten thousand sail !
They trust in armies, and their courage dies ;
In wisdom, wealth, in fortune, and in lies ;
But all they trust in withers, as it must,
When HE commands, in whom they place no trust.
Vengeance, at last, pours down upon their coast
A long despis'd, but now victorious, host ;
Tyranny sends the chain that must abridge
The noble sweep of all their privilege ;
Gives liberty the last, the mortal shock,
Slips the slave's collar on, and snaps the lock.

A. Such lofty strains embellish what you teach,
Mean you to prophesy, or but to preach ?

B. I know the mind that feels, indeed, the fire
The muse imparts, and can command the lyre,

Acts with a force, and kindles with a zeal,
Whate'er the theme, that others never feel.
If human woes her soft attention claim,
A tender sympathy pervades the frame,
She pours a sensibility divine
Along the nerve of every feeling line.
But, if a deed, not tamely to be borne,
Fire indignation and a sense of scorn,
The strings are swept with such a power so loud,
The storm of music shakes th' astonish'd crowd.
So, when remote futurity is brought
Before the keen inquiry of her thought,
A terrible sagacity informs
The poet's heart ; he looks to distant storms :
He hears the thunder ere the tempest lowers ;
And, arm'd with strength surpassing human powers,
Seizes events, as yet unknown to man,
And darts his soul into the dawning plan.
Hence in a Roman mouth, the graceful name
Of prophet and of poet was the same ;
Hence British poets, too, the priesthood shar'd,
And every hallowed Druid was a bard.
But no prophetic fires to me belong ;
I play with syllables, and sport in song.

A. At Westminster, where little poets strive
To set a distich upon six and five,
Where discipline helps opening buds of sense,
And makes his pupils proud with silver pence,
I was a poet too : but modern taste
Is so refin'd, and delicate, and chaste,

That verse, whatever fire the fancy warms,
Without a creamy smoothness, has no charms.
Thus, all success depending on an ear,
And thinking I might purchase it too dear,
If sentiment were sacrific'd to sound,
And truth cut short to make a period round,
I judg'd a man of sense could scarce do worse,
Than caper in the morris-dance of verse.

B. Thus reputation is a spur to wit,
And some wits flag through fear of losing it.
Give me the line that plows its stately course,
Like a proud swan, conquering the stream by force;
That, like some cottage beauty, strikes the heart,
Quite unindebted to the tricks of art.
When labour and when dulness club in hand,
Like the two figures at St. Dunstan's stand,
Beating alternately, in measur'd time,
The clock-work tintinabulum of rhyme,
Exact and regular the sounds will be ;
But such mere quarter-strokes are not for me.

From him who rears a poem lank and long,
To him who strains his all into a song ;
Perhaps some bonny Caledonian air,
All birks and braes, though he was never there ;
Or, having whelp'd a prologue with great pains,
Feels himself spent, and fumbles for his brains ;
A prologue interdash'd with many a stroke—
An art contriv'd to advertise a joke,
So that the jest is clearly to be seen,
Not in the words—but in the gap between :

Manner is all in all, whate'er is writ,
The substitute for genius, sense, and wit.

To dally much with subjects mean and low,
Proves that the mind is weak, or makes it so.
Neglected talents rust into decay,
And every effort ends in push-pin play.
The man that means success, should soar above
A soldier's feather, or a lady's glove ;
Else, summoning the muse to such a theme,
The fruit of all her labour is whipt-cream.
As if an eagle flew aloft, and then—
Stoop'd from its highest pitch to pounce a wren.
As if the poet, purposing to wed,
Should carve himself a wife in gingerbread.

Ages elaps'd ere Homer's lamp appear'd,
And ages ere the Mantuan swan was heard :
To carry nature lengths unknown before,
To give a Milton birth, ask'd ages more.
Thus genius rose and set at order'd times,
And shot a day-spring into distant climes,
Ennobling every region that he chose,
He sunk in Greece, in Italy he rose ;
And tedious years of Gothic darkness pass'd,
Emerg'd all splendour in our isle at last.
Thus lovely halcyons dive into the main,
Then show far off their shining plumes again.

A. Is genius only found in epic lays ?
Prove this, and forfeit all pretence to praise.

Make their heroic powers your own at once,
Or candidly confess yourself a dunce.

B. These were the chief : each interval of night.
Was grac'd with many an undulating light.
In less illustrious bards his beauty shone
A meteor, or a star ; in these, the sun.

The nightingale may claim the topmost bough,
While the poor grasshopper must chirp below :
Like him, unnotic'd, I, and such as I,
Spread little wings, and rather skip than fly ;
Perch'd on the meagre produce of the land,
An ell or two of prospect we command ;
But never peep beyond the thorny bound,
Or oaken fence, that hems the paddoc round.

In Eden, ere yet innocence of heart
Had faded, poetry was not an art ;
Language, above all teaching, or, if taught,
Only by gratitude and glowing thought,
Elegant as simplicity, and warm
As ecstasy, unmanacled by form,
Not prompted, as in our degenerate days,
By low ambition and the thirst of praise,
Was natural as is the flowing stream,
And yet magnificent—a God the theme !
That theme on earth exhausted, though above
'Tis found as everlasting as his love,
Man lavish'd all his thoughts on human things—
The feats of heroes, and the wrath of kings ;

But still, while virtue kindled his delight,
 The song was moral, and so far was right,
 'Twas thus till luxury seduc'd the mind,
 To joys less innocent, as less refin'd ;
 Then genius danc'd a bacchanal ; he crown'd
 The brimming goblet, seiz'd the thyrsus, bound
 His brows with ivy, rush'd into the field
 Of wild imagination, and there reel'd,
 The victim of his own lascivious fires,
 And, dizzy with delight, profan'd the sacred wires.
 Anacreon, Horace, play'd in Greece and Rome
 This bedlam part ; and others nearer home.
 When Cromwell fought for power, and while he
 reign'd

The proud Protector of the power he gain'd,
 Religion harsh, intolerant, austere,
 Parent of manners like herself severe,
 Drew a rough copy of the Christian face,
 Without the smile, the sweetness, or the grace ;
 The dark and sullen humour of the time
 Judg'd every effort of the muse a crime :
 Verse, in the finest mould of fancy cast,
 Was lumber in an age so void of taste :
 But when the second Charles assum'd the sway,
 And arts reviv'd beneath a softer day,
 Then, like a bow long forc'd into a curve,
 The mind, releas'd from too constrain'd a nerve,
 Flew to its first position with a spring,
 That made the vaulted roofs of pleasure ring.

His court, the dissolute and hateful school
Of wantonness, where vice was taught by rule,
Swarm'd with a scribbling herd, as deep inlaid
With brutal lust, as ever Circe made.
From these a long succession, in the rage
Of rank obscenity, debauch'd their age ;
Nor ceas'd, till, ever anxious to redress
Th' abuses of her sacred charge, the press,
The muse instructed a well nurtur'd train
Of abler votaries, to cleanse the strain,
And claim the palm for purity of song,
That lewdness had usurp'd and worn so long.
Then decent pleasantry and sterling sense,
That neither gave nor would endure offence,
Whipp'd out of sight, with satire just and keen,
The puppy pack that had defil'd the scene.

In front of these came Addison. In him
Humour in holiday and sightly trim,
Sublimity and attic taste, combin'd,
To polish, furnish, and delight the mind.
Then Pope, as harmony itself exact,
In verse well disciplin'd, complete, compact,
Gave virtue and morality a grace,
That, quite eclipsing pleasure's painted face,
Levied a tax of wonder and applause
Even on the fools that trampled on their laws,
But he (his musical finesse was such,
So nice his ear, so delicate his touch)
Made poetry a mere mechanic art ;
And every warbler has his tune by heart.

Nature imparting her satiric gift,
 Her serious mirth, to Arbuthnot and Swift,
 With droll sobriety they rais'd a smile
 At folly's cost, themselves unmov'd the while.
 That constellation set, the world in vain
 Must hope to look upon their like again.

A. Are we then left—*B.* Not wholly in the dark;
 Wit, now and then, struck smartly, shows a spark,
 Sufficient to redeem the modern race
 From total night, and absolute disgrace.
 While servile trick and imitative knack
 Confine the million in the beaten track,
 Perhaps some courser, who disdains the road,
 Snuffs up the wind, and flings himself abroad.
 Contemporaries all surpass'd, see one;
 Short his career, indeed, but ably run;
 Churchill, himself unconscious of his powers,
 In penury consum'd his idle hours;
 And, like a scatter'd seed at random sown,
 Was left to spring by vigour of his own.
 Lifted at length by dignity of thought
 And dint of genius to an affluent lot,
 He laid his head in luxury's soft lap,
 And took, too often, there his easy nap.
 If brighter beams than all he threw not forth,
 'Twas negligence in him, not want of worth.
 Surly and slovenly, and bold and coarse,
 Too proud for art, and trusting in mere force,
 Spendthrift alike of money and of wit,
 Always at speed, and never drawing bit,

He struck the lyre in such a careless mood,
And so disdain'd the rules he understood,
The laurel seem'd to wait on his command ;
He snatch'd it rudely from the muses' hand.
Nature, exerting an unwearied power,
Forms, opens, and gives scent to every flower ;
Spreads the fresh verdure of the field, and leads
The dancing Naiads through the dewy meads :
She fills, profuse, ten thousand little throats
With music, modulating all their notes ;
And charms the woodland scenes, and wilds unknown,
With artless airs and concerts of her own :
But seldom (as if fearful of expense)
Vouchsafes to man a poet's just pretence—
Fervency, freedom, fluency of thought,
Harmony, strength, words exquisitely sought !
Fancy, that from the bow that spans the sky
Brings colours, dipp'd in heaven, that never die ;
A soul exalted above earth ; a mind
Skill'd in the characters that form mankind ;
And, as the sun, in rising beauty dress'd,
Looks to the westward from the dappled east,
And marks, whatever clouds may interpose,
Ere yet his race begins its glorious close ;
An eye like his to catch the distant goal ;
Or, ere the wheels of verse begin to roll,
Like his, to shed illuminating rays
On every scene and subject it surveys ;
Thus grac'd, the man asserts a poet's name,
And the world cheerfully admits the claim.

Pity religion has so seldom found
A skillful guide into poetic ground !
The flowers would spring where'er she deign'd to stray,
And every muse attend her in her way.
Virtue, indeed, meets many a rhyming friend,
And many a compliment politely penn'd ;
But, unattir'd in that becoming-vest
Religion weaves for her, and half undress'd,
Stands in the desert, shivering and forlorn,
A wintry figure, like a wither'd thorn.
The shelves are full, all other themes are sped ;
Hackney'd and worn to the last slimy thread,
Satire has long since done his best ; and curst
And loathsome ribaldry has done his worst ;
Fancy has sported all her powers away
In tales, in trifles, and in children's play ;
And 'tis the sad complaint, and almost true,
Whate'er we write, we bring forth nothing new,
'Twere new, indeed, to see a bard all fire,
Touch'd with a coal from heaven, assume the lyre,
And tell the world, still kindling as he sung,
With more than mortal music on his tongue,
That HE, who died below, and reigns above,
Inspires the song, and that his name is love,

For, after all, if merely to beguile,
By flowing numbers and a flowery style,
The tedium that the lazy rich endure,
Which now and then sweet poetry may cure ;
Or, if to see the name of idle self
Stamp'd on the well-bound quarto, grace the shelf,

To float a bubble on the breath of fame,
Prompt his endeavour, and engage his aim,
Debas'd to servile purposes of pride,
How are the powers of genius misapplied !
The gift, whose office is the Giver's praise,
To trace him in his word, his works, his ways !
Then spread the rich discovery, and invite
Mankind to share in the divine delight.
Distorted from its use and just design,
To make the pitiful possessor shine ;
To purchase, at the fool-frequented fair
Of vanity, a wreath for self to wear,
Is profanation of the basest kind—
Proof of a trifling and a worthless mind.

A. Hail, Sternhold, then ; and Hopkins, hail !

B. Amen.

If flattery, folly, lust, employ the pen ;
If acrimony, slander, and abuse,
Give it a charge to blacken and traduce ;
Though Butler's wit, Pope's numbers, Prior's ease,
With all that fancy can invent to please,
Adorn the polish'd periods as they fall,
One madrigal of theirs is worth them all.

A. 'Twould thin the ranks of the poetic tribe,
To dash the pen through all that you proscribe.

B. No matter—we could shift when they were not ;
And should, no doubt, if they were all forgot.

THE
PROGRESS OF ERROR.

Si quid loquar audiendum.—HOR. Lib. 4. Od. 2.

SING, muse, if such a theme, so dark, so long,
May find a muse to grace it with a song,
By what unseen and unsuspected arts
The serpent, error, twines round human hearts ;
Tell where she lurks, beneath what flowery shades,
That not a glimpse of genuine light pervades,
The poisonous, black, insinuating worm,
Successfully conceals her loathsome form.
Take, if ye can, ye careless and supine,
Counsel and caution from a voice like mine !
Truths, that the theorist could never reach,
And observation taught me, I would teach.

Not all whose eloquence the fancy fills,
Musical as the chime of tinkling rills,
Weak to perform, though mighty to pretend,
Can trace her mazy windings to their end ;
Discern the fraud beneath the specious lure,
Prevent the danger, or prescribe the cure.
The clear harangue, and cold as it is clear,
Falls soporific on the listless ear :

Like quicksilver, the rhetoric they display
Shines as it runs, but grasp'd at, slips away.

Plac'd for his trial on this bustling stage,
From thoughtless youth to ruminating age,
Free in his will to choose or to refuse,
Man may improve the crisis, or abuse ;
Else on the fatalist's unrighteous plan,
Say, to what bar amenable were man ;
With naught in charge he could betray no trust ;
And, if he fell, would fall because he must ;
If love reward him, or if vengeance strike,
His recompense is both unjust alike.
Divine authority within his breast
Brings every thought, word, action to the test ;
Warns him or prompts, approves him or restrains,
As reason, or as passion, takes the reins.
Heaven from above, and conscience from within,
Cry in his startled ear—Abstain from sin !
The world around solicits his desire,
And kindles in his soul a treacherous fire ;
While, all his purposes and steps to guard,
Peace follows virtue as its sure reward ;
And pleasure brings as surely in her train,
Remorse, and sorrow, and vindictive pain.

Man, thus endued with an elective voice,
Must be supplied with objects of his choice.
Where'er he turns, enjoyment and delight,
Or present, or in prospect, meet his sight ;

Those open on the spot their honied store ;
These call him, loudly, to pursuit of more.
His unexhausted mine the sordid vice
Avarice shows, and virtue is the price.
Here various motives his ambition raise—
Power, pomp and splendour, and the thirst of praise ;
There beauty woos him with expanded arms ;
E'en Bacchanalian madness has its charms.

Nor these alone, whose pleasures, less refin'd,
Might well alarm the most unguarded mind,
Seek to supplant his inexperienc'd youth,
Or lead him, devious, from the path of truth ;
Hourly allurements on his passions press,
Safe in themselves, but dangerous in th' excess.

Hark ! how it floats upon the dewy air !
O what a dying, dying close was there !
'Tis harmony from yon sequester'd bower,
Sweet harmony, that soothes the midnight hour !
Long ere the charioteer of day had run
His morning course, th' enchantment was begun ;
And he shall gild yon mountain's height again,
Ere yet the pleasing toil becomes a pain.

Is this the rugged path, the steep ascent,
That virtue points to ? Can a life thus spent
Lead to the bliss she promises the wise,
Detach the soul from earth, and speed her to the skies ?
Ye devotees to your ador'd employ,
Enthusiast, drunk with an unreal joy,

Love makes the music of the blest above,
 Heaven's harmony in universal love ;
 And earthly sounds, though sweet, and well com-
 And lenient as soft opiates to the mind, [bin'd, }
 Leave vice and folly unsubdu'd behind.

Grey dawn appears, the sportsman and his train
 Speckle the bosom of the distant plain ;
 'Tis he, the Nimrod of the neighbouring lairs,
 Save that his scent is less acute than theirs ;
 For persevering chase, and headlong leaps,
 True beagle, as the staunchest hound he keeps.
 Charg'd with the folly of his life's mad scene,
 He takes offence and wonders what you mean ;
 The joy the danger and the toil o'erpays—
 'Tis exercise, and health, and length of days.
 Again, impetuous to the field he flies ;
 Leaps every fence but one, there falls and dies ;
 Like a slain deer the tumbrel brings him home,
 Unmiss'd, but by his dogs and by his groom.

Ye clergy ; while your orbit is your place,
 Lights of the world, and stars of human race ;
 But if, eccentric, ye forsake your sphere,
 Prodigies ominous, and view'd with fear.
 The comet's baneful influence is a dream ;
 Yours real, and pernicious in th' extreme.
 What then ! are appetites and lusts laid down
 With the same ease that man puts on his gown ?
 Will avarice and concupiscence give place,
 Charm'd by the sounds—Your Reverence, or Your
 Grace ?

No. But his own engagement binds him fast
 Or if it does not, brands him to the last,
 What atheists call him—a designing knave,
 A mere church juggler, hypocrite, and slave.
 Oh, laugh or mourn with me the fifeless jest,
 A cassock'd huntsman and a fiddling priest !
 He from Italian songsters takes his cue :
 Set Paul to music, he shall quote him too.
 He takes the field. The master of the pack
 Cries—Well done, saint ! and claps him on the back.
 Is this the path of sanctity ? Is this
 To stand a way-mark in the road to bliss ?
 Himself a wanderer from the narrow way,
 His silly sheep, what wonder if they stray ?
 Go cast your orders at your bishop's feet,
 Send your dishonour'd gown to Monmouth-street !
 The sacred function in your hands is made—
 Sad sacrilege !—no function, but a trade !

Occiduus is a pastor of renown ;
 When he has pray'd and preach'd the Sabbath down,
 With wire and catgut he concludes the day,
 Quavering and semiquavering care away.
 The full concerto swells upon your ear ;
 All elbows shake. Look in, and you would swear
 The Babylonian tyrant, with a nod,
 Had summon'd them to serve his golden god.
 So well that thought th' employment seems to suit,
 Psaltery and sackbut, dulcimer, and flute.
 Oh fie ! 'tis evangelical and pure :
 Observe each face how sober and demure !

Ecstasy sets her stamp on every mein ;
 Chins fallen, and not an eye-ball to be seen.
 Still I insist, though music heretofore
 Has charm'd me much, (not e'en Occiduous more)
 Love, joy, and peace, make harmony more meet
 For Sabbath evenings, and, perhaps, as sweet.

Will not the sickliest sheep of every flock
 Resort to this example as a rock ;
 There stand, and justify the foul abuse
 Of Sabbath hours with plausible excuse ?
 If apostolic gravity be free
 To play the fool on Sundays, why not we ?
 If he the tinkling harpsichord regards
 As inoffensive, what offence in cards ?
 Strike up the fiddles, let us all be gay !
 Laymen have leave to dance, if parsons play.

Oh Italy ! thy Sabbaths will be soon
 Our Sabbaths, clos'd with mummary and buffoon.
 Preaching and pranks will share the motley scene :
 Ours parcell'd out, as thine have ever been,
 Gods worship and the mountebank between. }
 What says the prophet ? Let that day be blest
 With holiness and consecrated rest.
 Pastime and business both it should exclude,
 And bar the door the moment they intrude ;
 Nobly distinguish'd above all the six,
 By deeds in which the world must never mix.
 Hear him again. He calls it a delight,
 A day of luxury, observ'd aright,

When the glad soul is made heaven's welcome guest,
Sits banqueting, and God provides the feast.
But triflers are engag'd and cannot come ;
Their answer to the call, is—*Not at home.*

Oh, the dear pleasures of the velvet plain,
The painted tablets, dealt and dealt again.
Cards with what rapture, and the polish'd die,
The yawning chasm of indolence supply !
Then to the dance, and make the sober moon
Witness of joys that shun the sight of noon.
Blame, cynic, if you can, quadrille or ball,
The snug close party, or the splendid hall,
Where night down-stooping from her ebon throne,
Views constellations brighter than her own.
'Tis innocent, and harmless, and refin'd ;
The balm of care, elysium of the mind.
Innocent ! Oh, if venerable time,
Slain at the foot of pleasure, be no crime,
Then, with his silver beard and magic wand,
Let Comus rise archbishop of the land ;
Let him your rubric and your feast prescribe,
Grand metropolitan of all the tribe.

Of manners rough, and coarse athletic cast,
The rank debauch suits Clodio's filthy taste,
Rufillus, exquisitely form'd by rule,
Not of the moral, but the dancing school,
Wonders at Clodio's follies, in a tone
As tragical, as others at his own.

He cannot drink five bottles, bilk the score,
Then kill a constable, and drink five more ;
But he can draw a pattern, make a tart,
And has the ladies' etiquette by heart.
Go, fool ; and, arm in arm with Clodio, plead
Your cause before a bar you little dread !
But know, the law, that bids the drunkard die,
Is far too just to pass the trifier by.
Both baby-featur'd, and of infant size,
View'd from a distance, and with heedless eyes,
Folly and innocence are so alike,
The difference though essential, fails to strike.
Yet folly ever has a vacant stare,
A simpering countenance, and a trifling air ;
But innocence, sedate, serene, erect,
Delights us, by engaging our respect.
Man, nature's guest by invitation sweet,
Receives from her both appetite and treat ;
But, if he play the glutton and exceed,
His benefactress blushes at the deed.
For nature, nice, as liberal to dispense,
Made nothing but a brute the slave of sense.
Daniel ate pulse by choice—example rare !
Heaven bless'd the youth, and made him fresh and fair,
Gorgonius sits, abdominous and wan,
Like a fat squab upon a Chinese fan ;
He snuffs, far off, th' anticipated joy ;
Turtle and venison all his thoughts employ ;
Prepares for meals as jockies take a sweat,
Oh, nauseous !—an emetic for a whet !

Will Providence o'erlook the wasted good ?
Temperance were no virtue if he could.

That pleasures, therefore, or what such we call,
Are hurtful, is a truth confess'd by all.
And some, that seem to threaten virtue less,
Still hurtful, in th' abuse, or by th' excess.

Is man, then, only for his torment plac'd
The centre of delights he may not taste ?
Like fabled Tantalus, condemn'd to hear
The precious stream still purling in his ear,
Lip-deep in what he longs for, and yet curst
With prohibition, and perpetual thirst ?
No, wrangler—destitute of shame and sense,
The precept, that enjoins him abstinence,
Forbids him none but the licentious joy,
Whose fruit, though fair, tempts only to destroy.
Remorse, the fatal egg, by pleasure laid
In every bosom where her nest is made,
Hatch'd by the beams of truth, denies him rest,
And proves a raging scorpion in his breast.
No pleasure ? Are domestic comforts dead ?
Are all the nameless sweets of friendship fled ?
Has time worn out, or fashion put to shame,
Good sense, good health, good conscience, and good
All these belong to virtue, and all prove [fame ?
That virtue has a title to your love.
Have you no touch of pity, that the poor
Stand starv'd at your inhospitable door ?

Or, if yourself, too scantily supplied,
Need help, let honest industry provide.
Earn, if you want ; if you abound, impart :
These both are pleasures to the feeling heart.
No pleasure ? Has some sickly eastern waste
Sent us a wind to parch us at a blast ?
Can British paradise no scenes afford
To please her sated and indifferent lord ?
Are sweet philosophy's enjoyments run
Quite to the lees ? And has religion none ?
Brutes, capable, would tell you 'tis a lie,
And judge you from the kennel and the sty.
Delights like these, ye sensual and profane,
Ye are bid, begg'd, besought to entertain ;
Call'd to these crystal streams, do ye turn off,
Obscene, to swill and swallow at a trough ?
Envy the beast then on whom Heaven bestows
Your pleasures, with no curses in the close.

Pleasure, admitted in undue degree,
Enslaves the will, nor leaves the judgment free.
'Tis not alone the grape's enticing juice
Unnerves the moral powers, and mars their use :
Ambition, avarice, and the lust of fame,
And woman, lovely woman, does the same.
The heart, surrender'd to the ruling power
Of some ungovern'd passion every hour,
Finds, by degrees, the truths that once bore sway,
And all their deep impressions, wear away.

So coin grows smooth, in traffic current pass'd,
Till Cæsar's image is effac'd at last.
The breach, though small at first, soon opening wide,
In rushes folly with a full-moon tide.
Then welcome errors, of whatever size,
To justify it by a thousand lies.
As creeping ivy clings to wood or stone,
And hides the ruin that it feeds upon ;
So sophistry cleaves close to, and protects
Sin's rotten trunk, concealing its defects.
Mortals, whose pleasures are their only care,
First wish to be impos'd on, and then are.
And lest the fulsome artifice should fail,
Themselves will hide its coarseness with a veil.
Not more industrious are the just and true,
To give to virtue what is virtue's due—
The praise of wisdom, comeliness, and worth ;
And call her charms to public notice forth—
Than vice's mean and disingenuous race
To hide the shocking features of her face.
Her form with dress and lotion they repair ;
Then kiss their idol, and pronounce her fair.

 'The sacred implement I now employ
Might prove a mischief, or at best a toy ;
A trifle, if it move but to amuse :
But, if to wrong the judgment and abuse,
Worse than a poniard in the basest hand,
It stabs at once the morals of a land.

Ye writers of what none with safety reads,
Footing it in the dance that fancy leads ;
Ye novelists, who mar what ye would mend,
Snivelling and drivelling folly without end ;
Whose corresponding misses fill the ream
With sentimental frippery and dream,
Caught in a delicate soft silken net,
By some lewd earl, or rake-hell baronet ;
Ye pimps, who under virtue's fair pretence
Steal to the closet of young innocence,
And teach her, unexperienc'd yet and green,
To scribble as you scribbled at fifteen ;
Who, kindling a combustion of desire,
With some cold moral think to quench the fire ;
Though all your engineering proves in vain,
The dribbling stream ne'er puts it out again :
Oh that a verse had power, and could command
Far, far away, these flesh-flies of the land ;
Who fasten, without mercy, on the fair,
And suck, and leave a craving maggot there.
Howe'er disguis'd th' inflammatory tale,
And cover'd with a fine-spun specious veil ;
Such writers, and such readers, owe the gust
And relish of their pleasure all to lust.

But the muse, eagle-pinion'd, has in view
A quarry more important still than you ;
Down, down the wind she swims, and sails away ;
Now stoops upon it, and now grasps the prey.

Petronius ! all the muses weep for thee ;
But every tear shall scald thy memory :
The graces, too, while virtue at their shrine
Lay bleeding under that soft hand of thine,
Felt each a mortal stab in her own breast,
Abhor'd the sacrifice, and curs'd the priest.
Thou polish'd and high-finish'd foe to truth,
Gray-beard corrupter of our listening youth,
To purge and skim away the filth of vice,
That, so refin'd, it might the more entice,
Then pour it on the morals of thy son,
To taint *his* heart, was worthy of *thine own* !
Now, while the poison all high life pervades,
Write, if thou can'st, one letter from the shades ;
One, and one only, charg'd with deep-regret
That thy worst part, thy principles, live yet ;
One sad epistle thence may cure mankind
Of the plague spread by bundles left behind.

'Tis granted, and no plainer truth appears, .
Our most important are our earliest years ;
The mind, impressible and soft, with ease
Imbibes and copies what she hears and sees,
And, through life's labyrinth holds fast the clue
'That education gives her, false or true.
Plants rais'd with tenderness are seldom strong ;
Man's coltish disposition asks the thong ;
And, without discipline, the favorite child,
Like a neglected forester, runs wild.
But we, as if good qualities would grow
Spontaneous, take but little pains to sow ;

We give some Latin, and a smatch of Greek ;
Teach him to fence and figure twice a week ;
And, having done, we think, the best we can,
Praise his proficiency, and dub him a man.

From school to Cam or Isis, and thence home ;
And thence, with all convenient speed, to Rome,
With reverend tutor, clad in habit lay,
To tease for cash, and quarrel with all day ;
With memorandum-book for every town,
And every post, and where the chaise broke down ;
His stock, a few French phrases got by heart ;
With much to learn, but nothing to impart,
The youth obedient to his sire's commands,
Sets off a wanderer into foreign lands.
Surpris'd at all they meet, the gosling pair,
With awkward gait, stretch'd neck, and silly stare,
Discover huge cathedrals, built with stone,
And steeples towering high, much like our own ;
But shew peculiar light by many a grin
At popish practices observ'd within.

Ere long, some bowing, smirking, smart abbé,
Remarks two loiterers that have lost their way ;
And, being always prim'd with *politesse*
For men of their appearance and address,
With much compassion undertakes the task
To tell them—more than they have wit to ask :
Points to inscriptions wheresoe'er they tread,
Such as, when legible, were never read,

But being canker'd now and half worn out,
Craze antiquarian brains with endless doubt ;
Some headless hero, or some Cæsar shows—
Defective only in his Roman nose ;
Exhibits elevations, drawings, plans,
Models of Herculeanean pots and pans ;
And sells them medals, which, if neither rare
Nor ancient, will be so, preserv'd with care.

Strange the recital ! from whatever cause
His great improvement and new lights he draws,
The squire, once bashful, is shamefac'd no more,
But teems with powers he never felt before ;
Whether increas'd momentum, and the force
With which from clime to clime he sped his course,
(As axles sometimes kindle as they go)
Chaf'd him, and brought dull nature to a glow ;
Or whether clearer skies and softer air,
That make Italian flowers so sweet and fair,
Freshening his lazy spirits as he ran,
Unfolded genially, and spread the man ;
Returning, he proclaims, by many a grace,
By shrugs, and strange contortions of his face,
How much a dunce, that has been sent to roam,
Excels a dunce that has been kept at home.

Accomplishments have taken virtue's place,
And wisdom falls before exterior grace ;
We slight the precious kernal of the stone,
And toil to polish its rough coat alone,

A just deportment, manners grac'd with ease,
 Elegant phrase, and figure form'd to please,
 Are qualities that seem to comprehend
 Whatever parents, guardians, schools, intend ;
 Hence an unfurnish'd and a listless mind,
 Though busy, trifling ; empty, though refin'd ;
 Hence all that interferes, and dares to clash
 With indolence and luxury, is trash ;
 While learning, once the man's exclusive pride,
 Seems verging fast towards the female side.
 Learning itself, receiv'd into a mind
 By nature weak, or viciously inclin'd,
 Serves but to lead philosophers astray,
 Where children would with ease discern the way.
 And, of all arts sagacious dupes invent
 To cheat themselves and gain the world's assent,
 The worst is—scripture warp'd from its intent.

}

The carriage bowls along, and all are pleas'd
 If Tom be sober, and the wheels well greas'd ;
 But, if the rogue have gone a cup too far,
 Left out his linch-pin, or forgot his tar,
 It suffers interruption and delay,
 And meets with hinderance in the smoothest way.
 When some hypothesis, absurd and vain,
 Has fill'd with all its fumes a critic's brain,
 The text that sorts not with his darling whim,
 Though plain to others, is obscure to him.
 The will made subject to a lawless force,
 All is irregular, and out of course ;

And judgment drunk, and brib'd to lose his way,
Winks hard, and talks of darkness at noon day.

A critic on the sacred book should be
Candid and learn'd, dispassionate and free ;
Free from the wayward bias bigots feel,
From fancy's influence, and intemperate zeal :
But, above all, (or let the wretch refrain,
Nor touch the page he cannot but profane)
Free from the domineering power of lust ;
A lewd interpreter is never just.

How shall I speak thee, or thy power address,
Thou god of our idolatry, the press ?
By thee, religion, liberty and laws,
Exert their influence, and advance their cause ;
By thee, worse plagues than Pharaoh's land beset,
Diffus'd, make earth the vestibule of hell ;
Thou fountain, at which drink the good and wise ;
Thou ever-bubbling spring of endless lies ;
Like Eden's dread probationary tree,
Knowledge of good and evil is from thee.

No wild enthusiast ever yet could rest
Till half mankind were like himself possess'd.
Philosophers, who darken and put out
Eternal truth by everlasting doubt ;
Church quacks, with passions under no command,
Who fill the world with doctrines contraband,
Discoveries of they know not what, confin'd
Within no bounds—the blind that lead the blind ;

To streams of popular opinion drawn,
Deposit in those shallows all their spawn.
The wriggling fry soon fill the creeks around,
Poisoning the waters where their swarms abound.
Scorn'd by the nobler tenants of the flood,
Minnows and gudgeons gorge th' unwholesome food.
The propagated myriads spread so fast,
E'en Leuwenhoeck himself would stand aghast,
Employ'd to calculate th' enormous sum,
And own his crab-computing powers o'ercome.
Is this hyperbole ? The world well known,
Your sober thoughts will hardly find it one.

Fresh confidence the speculatist takes
From every hair-brain'd proselyte he makes ;
And therefore prints : himself but half deceiv'd,
Till others have the soothing tale believ'd.
Hence comment after comment, spun as fine
As bloated spiders draw the flimsy line ;
Hence the same word, that bids our lusts obey,
Is misapplied, to sanctify their sway.
If stubborn Greek refuse to be his friend,
Hebrew or Syriac shall be forc'd to bend :
If languages and copies all cry, No—
Somebody prov'd it centuries ago.
Like trout pursued, the critic, in despair,
Darts to the mud, and finds his safety there.
Women, whom custom has forbid to fly
The scholar's pitch, (the scholar best knows why)
With all the simple and unletter'd poor,
Admire his learning, and almost adore.

Whoever errs, the priest can ne'er be wrong,
With such fine words familiar to his tongue.

Ye ladies ! (for, indifferent in your cause,
I should deserve to forfeit all applause)
Whatever shocks, or gives the least offence
To virtue, delicacy, truth, or sense,
(Try the criterion, 'tis a faithful guide)
Nor has, nor can have, scripture on its side.

None but an author knows an author's cares,
Or fancy's fondness for the child she bears.
Committed once into the public arms,
The baby seems to smile with added charms;
Like something precious ventur'd far from shore,
'Tis valued for the danger's sake the more.
He views it with complacency supreme,
Solicits kind attention to his dream ;
And daily, more enamour'd of the cheat,
Kneels, and asks Heaven to bless the dear deceit.
So one, whose story serves at least to show
Men lov'd their own productions long ago,
Woo'd an unfeeling statue for his wife,
Nor rested till the gods had given it life.
If some mere driveller suck the sugar'd fib,
One that still needs his leading-string and bib,
And praise his genius, he is soon repaid
In praise applied to the same part—his head.
For 'tis a rule, that holds forever true,
Grant me discernment, and I grant it you.

Patient of contradiction, as a child
Affable, humble, diffident, and mild ;
Such was Sir Isaac, and such Boyle and Locke ;
Your blunderer is as sturdy as a rock.
The creature is so sure to kick and bite,
A muleteer's ~~the~~ man to set him right.
First appetite enlists him truth's sworn foe,
Then obstinate self-will confirms him so.
Tell him he wanders ; that his error leads
To fatal ills ; that though the path he treads
Be flowery, and he see no cause of fear,
Death and the pains of hell attend him there ;
In vain ; the slave of arrogance and pride,
He has no hearing on the prudent side.
His still refuted quirks he still repeats ;
New rais'd objections with new quibbles meets ;
Till, sinking in the quicksand he defends,
He dies disputing, and the contest ends—
But not the mischiefs : they, still left behind,
Like thistle seeds are sown by every wind.

Thus men go wrong with an ingenious skill ;
Bend the straight rule to their own crooked will ;
And, with a clear and shining lamp supplied,
First put it out, then take it for a guide.
Halting on crutches of unequal size ;
One leg by truth supported, one by lies ;
They sidle to the goal with awkward pace,
Secure of nothing—but to lose the race.

Faults in the life breed errors in the brain ;
And these, reciprocally, those again.
The mind and conduct mutually imprint
And stamp their image in each other's mint :
Each, sire and dam of an infernal race,
Begetting and conceiving all that's base.

None sends his arrow to the mark in view,
Whose hand is feeble, or his aim untrue.
For though, ere yet the shaft is on the wing,
Or when it first forsakes th' elastic string,
It err but little from th' intended line,
It falls, at last, far wide of his design :
So he, who seeks a mansion in the sky,
Must watch his purpose with a steadfast eye ;
That prize belongs to none but the sincere,
The least obliquity is fatal here.

With caution taste the sweet Circean cup :
He that sips often, at last drinks it up.
Habits are soon assum'd ; but when we strive
To strip them off, 'tis being flay'd alive,
Call'd to the temple of impure delight,
He that abstains, and he alone, does right.
If a wish wander that way, call it home ;
He cannot long be safe whose wishes roam.
But, if you pass the threshold, you are caught ;
Die then, if power Almighty save you not.
There, hardening by degrees, till double steel'd,
Take leave of nature's God, and God reveal'd ;

Then laugh at all you trembled at before ;
 And, joining the free-thinker's brutal roar,
 Swallow the two grand nostrums they dispense—
 That scripture lies, and blasphemy is sense.
 If clemency revolted by abuse
 Be damnable, then damn'd without excuse.

Some dream that they can silence when they will
 The storm of passion, and say, *Peace, be still ;*
 But, "*Thus far and no farther,*" when address'd
 To the wild wave, or wilder human breast,
 Implies authority that never can,
 That never ought to be the lot of man.

But, muse, forbear ; long flights forebode a fall ;
 Strike on the deep-ton'd chord the sum of all.

Hear the just law—the judgment of the skies !
 He that hates truth shall be the dupe of lies ;
 And he that *will* be cheated to the last,
 Delusions, strong as hell, shall bind him fast.
 But, if the wanderer his mistake discern,
 Judge his own ways, and sigh for a return,
 Bewilder'd once, must he bewail his loss
 Forever and forever ? No—the cross !
 There, and there only, (though the deist rave,
 And atheist, if earth bear so base a slave ;)
 There, and there only, is the power to save.
 There no delusive hope invites despair ;
 No mockery meets you, no deception, there.

The spells and charms, that blinded you before,
All vanish there, and fascinate no more.

I am no preacher, let this hint suffice—
The cross, once seen, is death to every vice :
Else he that hung there suffer'd all his pain,
Bled, groan'd, and agoniz'd, and died, in vain.

TRUTH.

Pensantur trutind.—HOR. Lib. II. Epist. 1.

MAN, on the dubious waves of error toss'd,
His ship half founder'd and his compass lost,
Sees, far as human optics may command,
A sleeping fog, and fancies it dry land :
Spreads all his canvass, every sinew plies ;
Pants for't, aims at it, enters it, and dies !
Then farewell all self-satisfying schemes,
His well-built systems, philosophic dreams ;
Deceitful views of future bliss, farewell !
He reads his sentence at the flames of hell.
Hard lot of man—to toil for the reward
Of virtue, and yet lose it ! Wherefore hard ?—
He that would win the race must guide his horse
Obedient to the customs of the course ;
Else, though unequall'd to the goal he flies,
A meaner than himself shall gain the prize.
Grace leads the right way : if you choose the wrong,
Take it, and perish ; but restrain your tongue.
Charge not, with light sufficient, and left free,
Your wilful suicide on God's decree.

Oh how unlike the complex works of man,
 Heaven's easy, artless, unincumber'd, plan !
 No meretricious graces to beguile,
 No clustering ornaments to clog the pile ;
 From ostentation, as from weakness free,
 It stands like the cerulean arch we see,
 Majestic in its own simplicity. }
 Inscrib'd above the portal, from afar
 Conspicuous as the brightness of a star,
 Legible only by the light they give,
 Stand the soul-quickenings words—BELIEVE AND LIVE !
 Too many, shock'd at what should charm them most,
 Despise the plain direction, and are lost.
 Heaven on such terms ! (they cry with proud disdain)
 Incredible, impossible, and vain !—
 Rebel, because 'tis easy to obey ;
 And scorn, for its own sake, the gracious way.
 These are the sober, in whose cooler brains
 Some thought of immortality remains ;
 The rest, too busy, or too gay, to wait
 On the sad theme, their everlasting state,
 Sport for a day, and perish in a night ;
 The foam upon the waters not so light.

Who judg'd the pharisee ? What odious cause
 Expos'd him to the vengeance of the laws ?
 Had he seduc'd a virgin, wrong'd a friend,
 Or stabb'd a man to serve some private end ?
 Was blasphemy his sin ? Or did he stray
 From the strict duties of the sacred day ?

Sit long and late at the carousing board ?
 (Such were the sins with which he charg'd his Lord.)
 No—the man's morals were exact. What then ?
 'Twas his ambition to be seen of men ;
 His virtues were his pride ; and that one vice
 Made all his virtues gewgaws of no price ;
 He wore them, as fine trappings, for a show ;
 A praying, synagogue-frequenting, beau.

The self-applauding bird, the peacock, see—
 Mark what a sumptuous pharisee is he !
 Meridian sun-beams tempt him to unfold
 His radiant glories ; azure, green and gold :
 He treads as if, some solemn music near,
 His measur'd step were govern'd by his ear ;
 And seems to say—Ye meaner fowl, give place ;
 I am all spendour, dignity, and grace !

Not so the pheasant on his charms presumes ;
 Though he, too, has a glory in his plumes.
 He, christian-like, retreats with modest mien
 To the close copse, or far sequester'd green, }
 And shines, without desiring to be seen.
 The plea of works, as arrogant and vain,
 Heaven turns from with abhorrence and disdain :
 Not more affronted by avow'd neglect,
 Than by the mere dissembler's feign'd respect.
 What is all righteousness that men devise ?
 What—but a sordid bargain for the skies ?
 But Christ as soon would abdicate his own,
 As stoop from heaven to sell the proud a throne.

His dwelling a recess in some rude rock ;
Book, beads, and maple-dish, his meagre stock :
In shirt of hair and weeds of canvass dress'd,
Girt with a bell-rope that the pope has bless'd ;
A dust with stripes, told out for every crime,
And sore tormented, long before his time ;
His prayer preferr'd to saints that cannot aid ;
His praise postpon'd and never to be paid ;
See the sage hermit, by mankind admir'd,
With all that bigotry adopts inspir'd,
Wearing out life in his religious whim,
Till his religious whimsy wears out him.
His works, his abstinence, his zeal, allow'd,
You think him humble—God accounts him proud.
High in demand, though lowly in pretence,
Of all his conduct this the genuine sense—
My penitential stripes, my streaming blood,
Have purchas'd heaven, and prove my title good.

Turn Eastward now, and fancy shall apply
To your weak sight her telescopic eye.
The bramin kindles on his own bare head
The sacred fire—self-torturing his trade ;
His voluntary pains, severe and long,
Would give a barbarous air to British song ;
No grand inquisitor could worse invent,
Than he contrives, to suffer, well content.

Which is the saintlier worthy of the two ?
Past all dispute, yon anchorite, say you.

Your sentence and mine differ. What's a name?
I say the bramin has the fairer claim.
If sufferings, scripture no where recommends,
Devis'd by self, to answer selfish ends,
Give saintship, then, all Europe must agree
Ten starvling hermits suffer less than he.

The truth is, (if the truth may suit your ear,
And prejudice have left a passage clear)
Pride has attain'd its most luxuriant growth,
And poison'd every virtue in them both.
Pride may be pamper'd while the flesh grows lean;
Humility may clothe an English dean;
That grace was Cowper's—his, confess'd by all—
Though plac'd in golden Durham's second stall.
Not all the plenty of a bishop's board,
His palace, and his lacqueys, and "My Lord,"
More nourish pride, that condescending vice,
Than abstinence, and beggary, and lice;
It thrives in misery, and abundant grows;
In misery fools upon themselves impose.

But why before us protestants produce
An Indian mystic, or a French recluse?
Their sin is plain; but what have we to fear,
Reform'd, and well instructed? You shall hear.
Yon ancient prude, whose wither'd features show
She might be young some forty years ago,
Her elbows pinion'd close upon her hips,
Her head erect, her fan upon her lips,

Her eye-brows arch'd, her eyes both gone astray
To watch yon amorous couple in their play,
With bony and unkerchief'd neck, defies
The rude inclemency of wintry skies,
And sails, with lappet-head and quincing airs,
Duly, at clink of bell, to morning prayers.
To thrift and parsimony much inclin'd,
She yet allows herself that boy behind.
The shivering urchin, bending as he goes,
With slip-shod heels, and dew-drop at his nose ;
His predecessor's coat advanc'd to wear,
Which future pages yet are doom'd to share ;
Carries her bible tuck'd beneath his arm,
And hides his hands, to keep his fingers warm.

She, half an angel in her own account,
Doubts not, hereafter, with the saints to mount,
Though not a grace appears, on strictest search,
But that she fasts, and, *item*, goes to church.
Conscious of age, she recollects her youth,
And tells, not always with an eye to truth,
Who spann'd her waist, and who, where'er he came,
Scrawl'd upon glass Miss Bridget's lovely name ;
Who stole her slipper, fill'd it with tokay,
And drank the little bumper every day.
Of temper as envenom'd as an asp ;
Censorious, and her every word a wasp ;
In faithful memory she records the crimes,
Or real, or fictitious, of the times ;
Laughs at the reputations she has torn,
And holds them, dangling at arm's length, in scorn.

Such are the fruits of sanctimonious pride,
 Of malice fed while flesh is mortified :
 Take, Madam, the reward of all your prayers,
 Where hermits and where bramins meet with theirs ;
 Your portion is with them.—Nay, never frown ;
 But, if you please, some fathoms lower down.

Artist, attend ! your brushes and your paint—
 Produce them—take a chair—now draw a saint.
 Oh, sorrowful and sad ! the streaming tears
 Channel her cheeks—a Niobe appears !
 Is this a saint ? Throw tints and all away—
 True piety is cheerful as the day ;
 Will weep, indeed, and heave a pitying groan
 For others' woes, but smiles upon her own.

What purpose has the King of saints in view ?
 Why falls the gospel like a gracious dew ?
 To call up plenty from the teeming earth,
 Or curse the desert with a tenfold dearth ?
 Is it that Adam's offspring may be sav'd
 From servile fear, or be the more enslav'd ?
 To loose the links that gall'd mankind before,
 Or bind them faster on, and add still more ?
 The freeborn christian has no chains to prove ;
 Or, if a chain, the golden one of love :
 No fear attends to quench his glowing fires,
 What fear he feels his gratitude inspires.
 Shall he, for such deliverance, freely wrought,
 Recompense ill ? ~~He trembles at the thought.~~

His Master's interest and his own, combin'd;
Prompt every movement of his heart and mind ;
Thought, word, and deed, his liberty evince ;
His freedom is the freedom of a prince.

Man's obligations infinite, of course
His life should prove that he perceives their force ;
His utmost he can render is but small—
The principle and motive all in all.
You have two servants—Tom, an arch, sly rogue,
From top to toe the Geta now in vogue,
Genteel in figure, easy in address,
Moves without noise, and swift as an express,
Reports a message with a pleasing grace,
Expert in all the duties of his place :
Say, on what hinge does his obedience move ?
Has he a world of gratitude and love ?
No, not a spark—'tis all mere sharper's play ;
He likes your house, your housemaid, and your pay ;
Reduce his wages, or get rid of her,
Tom quits you with—Your most obedient, Sir.

The dinner serv'd, Charles takes his usual stand,
Watches your eye, anticipates command ;
Sighs, if, perhaps, your appetite should fail ;
And, if he but suspects a frown, turns pale ;
Consults, all day, your interest and your ease,
Richly rewarded, if he can but please ;
And, proud to make his firm attachment known,
To save your life, would nobly risk his own.

Now which stands highest in your serious thought ?
 Charles, without doubt, say you—and so he ought ;
 One act, that from a thankful heart proceeds,
 Excels ten thousand mercenary deeds.

Thus Heaven approves, as honest and sincere,
 The work of generous love and filial fear ;
 But, with averted eyes, th' omniscient Judge
 Scorns the base hireling, and the slavish drudge.
 Where dwell these matchless saints ? old Curio cries. }
 Even at your side, Sir, and before your eyes,
 The favour'd few—th' enthusiasts you despise,
 And pleas'd at heart, because, on holy ground
 Sometimes a canting hypocrite is found,
 Reproach a people with his single fall,
 And cast his filthy raiment at them all.
 Attend !—an apt similitude shall show
 Whence springs the conduct that offends you so.

See where it smokes along the sounding plain,
 Blown all aslant, a driving, dashing rain,
 Peal upon peal redoubling all around,
 Shakes it again, and faster, to the ground ;
 Now flashing wide, now glancing as in play,
 Swift beyond thought the lightnings dart away.
 Ere yet it came, the traveller urg'd his steed,
 And hurried, but with unsuccessful speed ;
 Now, drench'd throughout, and hopeless of his case,
 He drops the rein, and leaves him to his pace.
 Suppose, unlook'd-for in a scene so rude,
 Long hid by interposing hill or wood,

Some mansion, neat and elegantly dress'd,
By some kind hospitable heart possess'd,
Offer him warmth, security, and rest ;
Think with what pleasure, safe, and at his ease,
He hears the tempest howling in the trees ;
What glowing thanks his lips and heart employ,
While danger past is turn'd to present joy.
So fares it with the sinner, when he feels
A growing dread of vengeance at his heels :
His conscience, like a glassy lake before,
Lash'd into foaming waves, begins to roar ;
The law grown clamorous, though silent long,
Arraigns him—charges him with every wrong—
Asserts the rights of his offended Lord ;
And death, or restitution, is the word ;
The last impossible, he fears the first,
And, having well deserv'd, expects the worst.
Then welcome refuge, and a peaceful home ;
Oh for a shelter from the wrath to come !
Crush me, ye rocks ; ye falling mountains, hide
Or bury me in ocean's angry tide.—
The scrutiny of those all-seeing eyes
I dare not—And you need not, God replies ;
The remedy you want I freely give :
The book shall teach you—read, believe, and live !
'Tis done—the raging storm is heard no more,
Mercy receives him on her peaceful shore ;
And justice, guardian of the dread command,
Drops the red vengeance from his willing hand.

A soul, redeem'd, demands a life of praise ;
Hence the complexion of his future days.
Hence a demeanour holy and unspeck'd,
And the world's hatred, as its sure effect.

Some lead a life unblameable and just,
Their own dear virtue their unshaken trust :
They never sin—or, if (as all offend)
Some trivial slips their daily walk attend,
The poor are near at hand, the charge is small,
A slight gratuity atones for all !
For, though the pope has lost his interest here,
And pardons are not sold as once they were,
No papist more desirous to compound,
Than some grave sinners upon English ground.
That plea refuted, other quirks they seek—
Mercy is infinite, and man is weak ;
The future shall obliterate the past,
And heaven, no doubt, shall be their home at last.

Come, then—a still, small whisper in your ear—
He has no hope who never had a fear ;
And he that never doubted of his state,
He may, perhaps—perhaps he may—too late.

The path to bliss abounds with many a snare ;
Learning is one, and wit, however rare.
The Frenchman, first in literary fame,
(Mention him, if you please. Voltaire ?—The same.)
With spirit, genius, eloquence, supplied,
Liv'd long, wrote much, laugh'd heartily, and died.

The scripture was his jest book, whence he drew
Bon mots to gall the Christian and the Jew.
An infidel in health, but what when sick ?
Oh—then a text would touch him at the quick.
View him at Paris, in his last career :
Surrounding throngs the demi-god revere ;
Exalted on his pedestal of pride,
And fum'd with frankincense on every side,
He begs their flattery with his latest breath ;
And smother'd in't at last, is prais'd to death !

Yon cottager, who weaves at her own door,
Pillow and bobbins all her little store ;
Content, though mean ; and cheerful, if not gay ;
Shuffling her threads about the livelong day,
Just earns a scanty pittance ; and at night
Lies down secure, her heart and pocket light :
She, for her humble sphere by nature fit,
Has little understanding, and no wit ;
Receives no praise ; but, though her lot be such,
(Toilsome and indigent) she renders much ;
Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true—
A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew ;
And in that charter reads, with sparkling eyes,
Her title to a treasure in the skies.

Oh, happy peasant ! Oh unhappy bard !
His the mere tinsel, her's the rich reward ;
He prais'd, perhaps, for ages yet to come ;
She never heard of half a mile from home ;



James H. Ward

*Yon Cottager, who weaves at her own door,
Pillow and bobbin's all her little store;
Content tho' mean*



He, lost in errors, his vain heart prefers ;
She, safe in the simplicity of her's.

Not many wise, rich, noble, or profound
In science, win one inch of heavenly ground.
And, is it not a mortifying thought,
The poor should gain it, and the rich should not ?
No—the volupt'aries, who ne'er forget
One pleasure lost, lose heaven without regret ;
Regret would rouse them, and give birth to prayer ;
Prayer would add faith, and faith would fix them there.

Not that the Former of us all in this,
Or aught he does, is govern'd by caprice ;
The supposition is replete with sin,
And bears the brand of blasphemy burnt in.
Not so—the silver trumpet's heavenly call
Sounds for the poor, but sounds alike for all :
Kings are invited ; and, would kings obey,
No slaves on earth more welcome were than they :
But royalty, nobility, and state,
Are such a dead preponderating weight,
That endless bliss, (how strange soe'er it seem)
In counterpoise, flies up and kicks the beam.
'Tis open, and ye cannot enter—why ?
Because ye will not, Conyers would reply—
And he says much that many may dispute
And cavil at with ease, but none refute.
Oh, bless'd effect of penury and want,
The seed sown there, how vigorous is the plant !

No soil like poverty for growth divine,
As leanest land supplies the richest wine.
Earth gives too little, giving only bread,
To nourish pride, or turn the weakest head :
To them the sounding jargon of the schools
Seems what it is—a cap and bells for fools :
'The light they walk by, kindled from above,
Shows them the shortest way to life and love :
They, strangers to the controversial field,
Where deists, always foil'd, yet scorn to yield,
And never check'd by what impedes the wise,
Believe, rush forward, and possess the prize.

Envy, ye great, the dull unletter'd small :
Ye have much cause for envy—but not all.
We boast some rich ones whom the gospel sways ;
And one who wears a coronet, and prays ;
Like gleanings of an olive tree, they show
Here and there one upon the topmost bough.

How readily, upon the gospel plan,
That question has its answer—What is man ?
Sinful and weak, in every sense a wretch ;
An instrument, whose chords, upon the stretch,
And strain'd to the last screw that he can bear,
Yield only discord in his Maker's ear.
Once the blest residence of truth divine,
Glorious as Solyma's interior shrine,
Where, in his own oracular abode,
Dwelt visibly the light-creating God ;

But made long since, like Babylon of old,
A den of mischiefs never to be told :
And she, once mistress of the realms around,
Now scatter'd wide, and no where to be found,
As soon shall rise and re-ascend the throne,
By native power and energy her own,
As nature, at her own peculiar cost,
Restore to man the glories he has lost.
Go—bid the winter cease to chill the year ;
Replace the wandering comet in his sphere ;
Then boast (but wait for that unhop'd for hour)
The self-restoring arm of human power.
But what is man in his own proud esteem ?
Hear him—himself the poet and the theme :
A monarch, cloth'd with majesty and awe ;
His mind his kingdom, and his will his law ;
Grace in his mien, and glory in his eyes,
Supreme on earth, and worthy of the skies,
Strength in his heart, dominion in his nod,
And, thunderbolts excepted, quite a God !

So sings he, charm'd with his own mind and form,
The song magnificent—the theme a worm !
Himself so much the source of his delight,
His Maker has no beauty in his sight.
See where he sits, contemplative and fix'd,
Pleasure and wonder in his features mix'd ;
His passions tam'd, and all at his controul,
How perfect the composure of his soul !

Complacency has breath'd a gentle gale
O'er all his thoughts, and swell'd his easy sail :
His books well trimm'd, and in the gayest style,
Like regimented coxcombs, rank and file,
Adorn his intellects as well as shelves,
And teach him notions splendid as themselves :
The Bible only stands neglected there—
Though that of all most worthy of his care ;
And, like an infant, troublesome awake,
Is left to sleep, for peace and quiet sake.

What shall the man deserve of human kind,
Whose happy skill and industry, combin'd,
Shall prove (what argument could never yet)
The Bible an imposture and a cheat ?
The praises of the libertine, profess'd
The worst of men, and curses of the best.
Where should the living, weeping o'er his woes ;
The dying, trembling at the awful close ;
Where the betray'd, forsaken, and oppress'd,
The thousands whom the world forbids to rest :
Where should they find, (those comforts at an end
The scripture yields) or hope to find, a friend ?
Sorrow might muse herself to madness then ;
And, seeking exile from the sight of men,
Bury herself in solitude profound,
Grow frantic with her pangs, and bite the ground.
Thus often unbelief, grown sick of life,
Flies to the tempting pool, or felon knife.
The jury meet, the coroner is short,
And lunacy the verdict of the court.

Reverse the sentence, let the truth be known,
 Such lunacy is ignorance alone.
 They knew not, what some bishops may not know,
 That scripture is the only cure of woe.
 That field of promise, how it flings abroad
 Its odour o'er the Christian's thorny road !
 The soul, reposing on assur'd relief,
 Feels herself happy amidst all her grief,
 Forgets her labour as she toils along,
 Weeps tears of joy, and bursts into a song.

But the same word, that, like the polish'd share,
 Ploughs up the roots of a believer's care,
 Kills, too, the flowery weeds, where'er they grow,
 That bind the sinner's Bacchanalian brow.
 O that unwelcome voice of heavenly love,
 Sad messenger of mercy from above !
 How does it grate upon his thankless ear,
 Crippling his pleasures with the cramp of fear !
 His will and judgment at continual strife,
 That civil war embitters all his life :
 In vain he points his powers against the skies,
 In vain he closes or averts his eyes,
 Truth will intrude—she bids him yet beware ;
 And shakes the sceptic in the scorner's chair.

Though various foes against the truth combine,
 Pride, above all, opposes her design ;
 Pride, of a growth superior to the rest,
 The subtlest serpent, with the loftiest crest,

Swells at the thought, and, kindling into rage,
Would hiss the cherub mercy from the stage.

And is the soul, indeed, so lost ?—she cries ;
Fallen from her glory, and too weak to rise ?
Torpid and dull, beneath a frozen zone,
Has she no spark that may be deem'd her own ?
Grant her indebted to what zealots call
Grace undeserv'd—yet, surely, not for all !
Some beams of rectitude she yet displays,
Some love of virtue, and some power to praise ;
Can lift herself above corporeal things,
And, soaring on her own unborrowed wings,
Possess herself of all that's good or true,
Assert the skies, and vindicate her due.
Past indiscretion is a venial crime ;
And, if the youth, unmellow'd yet by time,
Bore on his branch, luxuriant then and rude,
Fruits of a blighted size, austere and crude,
Maturer years shall happier stores produce,
And meliorate the well concocted juice.
Then, conscious of her meritorious zeal,
To justice she may make her bold appeal ;
And leave to mercy, with a tranquil mind,
The worthless and unfruitful of mankind.
Hear, then, how mercy, slighted and defied,
Retorts th' affront against the crown of pride.

Perish the virtue, as it ought, abhorr'd,
And the fool with it, who insults his Lord.

Th' atonement a Redeemer's love has wrought
 Is not for you—the righteous need it not.
 Seest thou yon harlot, wooing all she meets,
 The worn-out nuisance of the public streets ;
 Herself, from morn to night, from night to morn,
 Her own abhorrence, and as much your scorn !
 The gracious shower, unlimited and free,
 Shall fall on her, when Heaven denies it thee.
 Of all that wisdom dictates, this the drift—
 That man is dead in sin, and life a gift.

Is virtue, then, unless of christian growth,
 Mere fallacy, or foolishness, or both ?
 Ten thousand sages lost in endless woe,
 For ignorance of what they could not know ?
 That speech betrays at once a bigot's tongue—
 Charge not a God with such outrageous wrong !
 Truly, not I—the partial light men have,
 My creed persuades me, well employed, may save ;
 While he that scorns the noon-day beam, perverse,
 Shall find the blessing, unimprov'd, a curse.
 Let heathen worthies, whose exalted mind
 Left sensuality and dross behind,
 Possess, for me, their undisputed lot,
 And take, unenvied, the reward they sought.
 But still, in virtue of a Saviour's plea,
 Not blind by choice, but destin'd not to see.
 Their fortitude and wisdom were a flame
 Celestial though they knew not whence it came,
 Deriv'd from the same source of light and grace
 That guides the christian in his swifter race.

Their judge was conscience, and her rule their law :
That rule, pursued with reverence and with awe,
Led them, however faltering, faint and slow,
From what they knew to what they wish'd to know.
But let not him, that shares a brighter day,
Traduce the splendour of a noon-tide ray,
Prefer the twilight of a darker time,
And deem his base stupidity no crime ;
The wretch, who slights the bounty of the skies,
And sinks, while favour'd with the means to rise,
Shall find them rated at their full amount,
The good he scorn'd all carried to account.

Marshalling all his terrors as he came ;
Thunder, and earthquake, and devouring flame ;
From Sinai's top Jehovah gave the law—
Life for obedience—death for every flaw.
When the great Sovereign would his will express,
He gives a perfect rule ; what can he less ?
And guards it with a sanction as severe
As vengeance can inflict, or sinners fear :
Else his own glorious rights he would disclaim,
And man might safely trifle with his name.
He bids him glow with unremitting love
To all on earth, and to himself above ;
Condemns th' injurious deed, the slanderous tongue,
The thought that meditates a brother's wrong :
Brings not alone the more conspicuous part—
His conduct—to the test, but tries his heart.

Hark ! universal nature shook and groan'd,
'Twas the last trumpet—see the Judge enthron'd :

Rouse all your courage at your utmost need ;
 Now summon every virtue—stand, and plead.
 What ! silent ? Is your boasting heard no more ?
 That self-renouncing wisdom, learn'd before,
 Had shed immortal glories on your brow,
 That all your virtues cannot purchase now.

All joy to the believer ! He can speak—
 Trembling, yet happy ; confident, yet meek.

Since the dear hour that brought me to thy foot,
 And cut up all my follies by the root,
 I never trusted in an arm but thine,
 Nor hop'd, but in thy righteousness divine :
 My prayers and alms, imperfect and defil'd,
 Were but the feeble efforts of a child ;
 Howe'er perform'd, it was their brightest part,
 That they proceeded from a grateful heart :
 Cleans'd in thine own all-purifying blood,
 Forgive their evil, and accept their good.
 I cast them at thy feet—my only plea
 Is what it was—dependence upon thee :
 While struggling in the vale of tears below,
 That never fail'd, nor shall it fail me now.

Angelic gratulations rend the skies :
 Pride falls unpitied, never more to rise ;
 Humility is crown'd ; and faith receives the prize. }

EXPOSTULATION.

*Tantane, tam patiens, nullo certamine tolli
Dona sines ?* VIRG.

WHY weeps the muse for England ? What appears
In England's case to move the muse to tears ?
From side to side of her delightful isle
Is she not cloth'd with a perpetual smile ?
Can nature add a charm, or art confer
A new-found luxury, not seen in her ?
Where under heaven, is pleasure more pursued ?
Or where does cold reflection less intrude ?
Her fields a rich expanse of wavy corn,
Pour'd out from plenty's overflowing horn ;
Ambrosial gardens, in which art supplies
The fervour and the force of Indian skies ;
Her peaceful shores, where busy commerce waits
To pour his golden tide through all her gates ;
Whom fiery suns, that scorch the russet spice
Of eastern groves, and oceans floor'd with ice,
Forbid, in vain, to push his daring way
To darker climes, or climes of brighter day ;
Whom the winds waft where'er the billows roll,
From the world's girdle to the frozen pole ;

The chariots, bounding on her wheel-worn streets ;
Her vaults below, where every vintage meets ;
Her theatres, her revels, and her sports ;
The scenes to which not youth alone resorts,
But age, in spite of weakness and of pain,
Still haunts, in hope to dream of youth again ;
All speak her happy, let the muse look round
From east to west, no sorrow can be found ;
Or only what, in cottages confin'd,
Sighs unregarded to the passing wind.
Then wherefore weep for England ? What appears
In England's case to move the muse to tears ?

The prophet wept for Israel ; wish'd his eyes
Were fountains fed with infinite supplies :
For Israel dealt in robbery and wrong ;
There were the scorner's and the slanderer's tongue ;
Oaths, us'd as playthings or convenient tools,
As interest bias'd knaves, or fashion fools ;
Adultery, neighing at his neighbour's door ;
Oppression, labouring hard to grind the poor ;
The partial balance, and deceitful weight ;
The treacherous smile, a mask for secret hate ;
Hypocrisy, formality in prayer,
And the dull service of the lip, were there.
Her women, insolent and self-caress'd,
By vanity's unwearied finger dress'd,
Forgot the blush that virgin fears impart
To modest cheeks, and borrow'd one from art ;
Were just such trifles, without worth or use,
As silly pride and idleness produce ;

Curl'd, scented, furbelow'd, and flounc'd around,
With feet too delicate to touch the ground,
They stretch'd the neck, and roll'd the wanton eyes,
And sigh'd for every fool that flutter'd by.

He saw his people slaves to every lust,
Lewd, avaricious, arrogant, unjust ;
He heard the wheels of an avenging God
Groan heavily along the distant road ;
Saw Babylon set wide her two-leav'd brass
To let the military deluge pass !
Jerusalem a prey, her glory soil'd,
Her princes captive, and her treasure spoil'd ;
Wept till all Israel heard his bitter cry ;
Stamp'd with his foot ; and smote upon his thigh :
But wept, and stamp'd, and smote his thigh in vain—
Pleasure is deaf when told of future pain,
And sounds prophetic are too rough to suit
Ears long accusom'd to the pleasing lute—
They scorn'd his inspiration and his theme :
Pronounc'd him frantic, and his fears a dream ;
With self-indulgence wing'd the fleeting hours,
Till the foe found them, and down fell the towers.

Long time Assyria bound them in her chain ;
Till penitence had purg'd the public stain,
And Cyrus, with relenting pity mov'd,
Return'd them happy to the land they lov'd :
There, proof against prosperity, awhile
They stood the test of her ensnaring smile ;

And had the grace, in scenes of peace, to show
The virtue they had learn'd in scenes of woe.
But man is frail, and can but ill sustain
A long immunity from grief and pain ;
And, after all the joys that plenty leads,
With tip-toe step vice silently succeeds.

When he that rul'd them with a shepherd's rod,
In form a man, in dignity a God,
Came, not expected in that humble guise,
To sift and search them with unerring eyes,
He found, conceal'd beneath a fair outside,
The filth of rottenness and worm of pride ;
Their piety a system of deceit,
Scripture employ'd to sanctify the cheat ;
The pharisee the dupe of his own art,
Self-idoliz'd, and yet a knave at heart !

When nations are to perish in their sins,
'Tis in the church the leprosy begins.
The priest, whose office is, with zeal sincere,
To watch the fountain and preserve it clear,
Carelessly nods and sleeps upon the brink,
While others poison what the flock must drink ;
Or, waking at the call of lust alone,
Infuses lies and errors of his own.
His unsuspecting sheep believe it pure ;
And, tainted by the very means of cure,
Catch from each other a contagious spot,
The foul forerunner of a general rot.

Then truth is hush'd, that heresy may preach ;
And all is trash that reason cannot teach :
Then God's own image, on the soul impress'd,
Becomes a mockery and a standing jest ;
And faith, the root whence only can arise
The graces of a life that wins the skies,
Loses at once all value and esteem,
Promounc'd by grey beards—a pernicious dream :
Then ceremony leads her bigots forth,
Prepar'd to fight for shadows of no worth ;
While truths, on which eternal things depend,
Find not, or hardly find, a single friend :
As soldiers watch the signal of command,
They learn to bow, to kneel, to sit, to stand ;
Happy to fill religion's vacant place
With hollow form, and gesture, and grimace.

Such, when the teacher of his church was there,
People and priest the sons of Israel were ;
Stiff in the letter, lax in the design
And import, of their oracles divine ;
Their learning legendary, false, absurd,
And yet exalted above God's own word ;
They drew a curse from an intended good,
Puff'd up with gifts they never understood.
He judg'd them with as terrible a frown,
As if not love, but wrath, had brought him down :
Yet he was gentle as soft summer airs ;
Had grace for others' sins, but none for their's.
Through all he spoke a noble plainness ran—
Rhetoric is artifice, the work of man ;

And tricks and turns, that fancy may devise,
Are far too mean for Him that rules the skies.
Th' astonish'd vulgar trembled while he tore
The mask from faces never seen before :
He stripp'd th' impostors in the noon-day sun ;
Shew'd that they follow'd all they seem'd to shun ;
Their prayers made public, their excesses kept
As private as the chambers where they slept ;
The temple and its holy rites profan'd
By mummeries he that dwelt in it disdain'd ;
Uplifted hands, that at convenient times
Could act extortion and the worst of crimes,
Wash'd with a neatness scrupulously nice,
And free from every taint but that of vice.
Judgment, however tardy, mends her pace
When obstinacy once has conquer'd grace.
They saw distemper heal'd, and life restor'd,
In answer to the fiat of his word ;
Confess'd the wonder, and, with daring tongue,
Blasphem'd th' authority from which it sprung.
They knew, by sure prognostics seen on high,
The future tone and temper of the sky ;
But, grave dissemblers ! could not understand,
That sin, let loose, speaks punishment at hand.

Ask now of history's authentic page,
And call up evidence from every age ;
Display with busy and laborious hand
The blessings of the most indebted land :
What nation will you find, whose annals prove
So rich an interest in Almighty love ?

Where dwell they now, where dwelt in ancient day,
A people planted, water'd, blest, as they ?
Let Egypt's plagues and Canaan's woes proclaim
The favours pour'd upon the Jewish name—
Their freedom, purchas'd for them at the cost
Of all their hard oppressors valued most ;
Their title to a country not their own
Made sure by prodigies till then unknown ;
For them, the states they left, made waste and void ;
For them, the states to which they went, destroy'd ;
A cloud to measure out their march by day,
By night a fire to cheer the gloomy way ;
That moving signal summoning, when best,
— Their host to move ; and when it stay'd, to rest.
For them the rocks dissolv'd into a flood,
The dews condens'd into angelic food ;
Their very garments sacred—old, yet new,
And time forbid to touch them as he flew ;
Streams, swell'd above the bank, enjoin'd to stand,
While they pass'd through to their appointed land ;
Their leader arm'd with meekness, zeal and love,
And grac'd with clear credentials from above ;
Themselves secur'd beneath th' Almighty wing ;
Their God their captain,* lawgiver, and king ;
Crown'd with a thousand victories, and at last
Lords of the conquer'd soil, there rooted fast,
In peace possessing what they won by war,
Their name far publish'd, and rever'd as far ;
Where will you find a race like theirs, endow'd
With all that men e'er wish'd, or Heaven bestow'd ?

* Vide Joshua v. 14.

They, and they only, amongst all mankind,
Receiv'd the transcript of th' Eternal Mind ;
Were trusted with his own engraven laws,
And constituted guardians of his cause ;
Theirs were the prophets, theirs the priestly call,
And theirs, by birth, the Saviour of us all.
In vain the nations, that had seen them rise
With fierce and envious, yet admiring eyes,
Had sought to crush them, guarded as they were
By power divine, and skill that could not err.
Had they maintain'd allegiance firm and sure,
And kept the faith immaculate and pure,
Then the proud eagles of all-conquering Rome
Had found one city not to be o'ercome ;
And the twelve standards of the tribes unfurl'd
Had bid defiance to the warring world.
But grace, abus'd, brings forth the foulest deeds,
As richest soil the most luxuriant weeds.
Cur'd of the golden calves, their fathers' sin,
They set up self, that idol god within ;
View'd a Deliverer with disdain and hate,
Who left them still a tributary state ;
Seiz'd fast his hand, held out to set them free
From a worse yoke, and nail'd it to the tree :
There was the consummation and the crown,
The flower of Israel's infamy full blown :
Thence date their sad declension and their fall ;
Their woes, not yet repeal'd—thence date them all !

Thus fell the best instructed in her day,
And the most favour'd land, look where we may.

Philosophy, indeed, on Grecian eyes
Had pour'd the day, and clear'd the Roman skies ;
In other climes, perhaps, creative art,
With power surpassing theirs, perform'd her part ;
Might give more life to marble, or might fill
The glowing tablets with a juster skill,
Might shine in fable, and grace idle themes
With all th' embroidery of poetic dreams :
'Twas theirs alone to dive into the plan,
That truth and mercy had reveal'd to man ;
And, while the world beside, that plan unknown,
Deified useless wood or senseless stone,
They breath'd in faith their well-directed prayers,
And the true God—the God of truth—was theirs.

Their glory faded, and their race dispers'd ;
The last of nations now, though once the first ;
They warn and teach the proudest, would they learn,
Keep wisdom, or meet vengeance in your turn :
If we escap'd not, if Heaven spar'd not us,
Peel'd, scatter'd, and exterminated, thus ;
If vice receiv'd her retribution due
When we were visited, what hope for you ?
When God arises, with an awful frown,
To punish lust, or pluck presumption down ;
When gifts perverted, or not duly priz'd,
Pleasure o'ervalued, and his grace despis'd,
Provoke the vengeance of his righteous hand
To pour down wrath upon a thankless land ;
He will be found impartially severe ;
Too just to wink, or speak the guilty clear.

Oh, Israel, of all nations most undone !
 Thy diadem displac'd, thy sceptre gone ;
 Thy temple, once thy glory, fall'n and ras'd,
 And thou a worshipper e'en where thou mayest ;
 Thy services, once holy, without spot,
 Mere shadows now, their ancient pomp forgot ;
 Thy Levites, once a consecrated host,
 No longer Levites, and their lineage lost,
 And thou thyself o'er every country sown,
 With none on earth that thou canst call thine own ;
 Cry aloud, thou that sittest in the dust,
 Cry to the proud, the cruel, and unjust ;
 Knock at the gates of nations, rouse their fears ;
 Say wrath is coming, and the storm appears ;
 But raise the shrillest cry in British ears.

What ails thee, restless as the waves that roar,
 And fling their foam against thy chalky shore ?
 Mistress, at least while Providence shall please,
 And trident-bearing queen of the wide seas—
 Why, having kept good faith, and often shown
 Friendship and truth to others, find'st thou none ?
 Thou that hast set the persecuted free,
 None interposes now to succour thee.
 Countries indebted to thy power, that shine
 With light deriv'd from thee, would smother thine :
 Thy very children watch for thy disgrace—
 A lawless brood ! and curse thee to thy face.
 Thy rulers load thy credit, year by year,
 With sums Peruvian mines could never clear ;

As if, like arches built with skilful hand,
The more 'twere press'd the firmer it would stand!

The cry in all thy ships is still the same—
Speed us away to battle and to fame.
Thy mariners explore the wild expanse,
Impatient to descry the flags of France :
But, though they fight as thine have ever fought,
Return, ashamed, without the wreaths they sought.
Thy senate is a scene of civil jar,
Chaos of contrarieties at war ;
Where sharp and solid, phlegmatic and light,
Discordant atoms meet, ferment, and fight ;
Where obstinacy takes his sturdy stand,
To disconcert what policy has plann'd ;
Where policy is busied all night long
In setting right what faction has set wrong ;
Where flails of oratory thresh the floor,
That yields them chaff and dust, and nothing more ;
Thy rack'd inhabitants repine, complain,
Tax'd till the brow of labour sweats in vain ;
War lays a burthen on the reeling state,
And peace does nothing to relieve the weight ;
Successive loads succeeding broils impose,
And sighing millions prophesy the close.

Is adverse providence, when ponder'd well,
So dimly writ, or difficult to spell,
Thou canst not read, with readiness and ease,
Providence adverse in events like these?

Know, then, that heavenly wisdom, on this ball,
Creates, gives birth to, guides, consummates, all;
That, while laborious and quick-thoughted man
Snuffs up the praise of what he seems to plan,
He first conceives, then perfects his design,
As a mere instrument in hands divine.
Blind to the working of that secret power
That balances the wings of every hour,
The busy trifler dreams himself alone,
Frames many a purpose, and God works his own.
States thrive or wither, as moons wax and wane,
Even as his will and his decrees ordain.
While honour, virtue, piety, bear sway,
They flourish; and, as these decline, decay.
In just resentment of his injur'd laws,
He pours contempt on them, and on their cause;
Strikes the rough thread of error right athwart
The web of every scheme they have at heart;
Bids rottenness invade and bring to dust
The pillars of support, in which they trust,
And do his errand of disgrace and shame
On the chief strength and glory of the frame.
None ever yet impeded what he wrought;
None bars him out from his most secret thought:
Darkness itself before his eye is light,
And hell's close mischief naked in his sight.

Stand now, and judge thyself.—Hast thou incur'd
His anger, who can waste thee with a word,
Who poises and proportions sea and land,
Weighing them in the hollow of his hand,

And in whose awful sight all nations seem
As grasshoppers, as dust, a drop, a dream ?
Hast thou (a sacrilege his soul abhors)
Claim'd all the glory of thy prosperous wars ?
Proud of thy fleets and armies, stolen the gem
Of his just praise, to lavish it on them ?
Hast thou not learn'd what thou art often told,
A truth still sacred, and believ'd of old,
That no success attends on spears and swords
Unblest, and that the battle is the Lord's ?
That courage is his creature, and dismay
The post that, at his bidding, speeds away,
Ghastly in feature, and his stammering tongue
With doleful humour and sad presage hung,
To quell the valour of the stoutest heart,
And teach the combatant a woman's part ?
That he bids thousands fly when none pursue,
Saves as he will, by many or by few,
And claims forever, as his royal right,
Th' event and sure decision of the fight ?

Hast thou, though suckled at fair freedom's breast,
Exported slavery to the conquer'd east,
Pull'd down the tyrants India serv'd with dread,
And rais'd thyself, a greater, in their stead ?
Gone thither arm'd and hungry, return'd full,
Fed from the richest veins of the Mogul,
A despot big with power obtain'd by wealth,
And that obtain'd by rapine and by stealth ?
With Asiatic vices stor'd thy mind,
But left their virtues and thine own behind ;

And, having truck'd thy soul, brought home the fee,
To tempt the poor to sell himself to thee ?

Hast thou by statute shov'd from its design
The Saviour's feast, his own blest bread and wine,
And made the symbols of atoning grace
An office-key, a pick-lock to a place,
That infidels may prove their title good,
By an oath dipp'd in sacramental blood ?
A blot that will be still a blot, in spite
Of all that grave apologists may write ;
And, though a bishop toil to cleanse the stain,
He wipes and scours the silver cup in vain.
And hast thou sworn, on every slight pretence,
Till perjuries are common as bad pence,
While thousands, careless of the damning sin,
Kiss the book's outside, who ne'er look within ?

Hast thou, when Heaven has cloth'd thee with dis-
grace,

And, long provok'd, repaid thee to thy face,
(For thou hast known eclipses, and endur'd
Dimness and anguish, all thy beams obscur'd,
When sin has shed dishonour on thy brow ;
And never of a sabler hue than now)
Hast thou, with heart perverse and conscience sear'd,
Despising all rebuke, still persever'd,
And, having chosen evil, scorn'd the voice
That cried, Repent !—and gloried in thy choice ?
Thy fastings, when calamity at last
Suggests th' expedient of a yearly fast,

What meant they ? Canst thou dream there is a power
In lighter diet, at a later hour,
To charm to sleep the threatening of the skies,
And hide past folly from all-seeing eyes ?
The fast that wins deliverance, and suspend
The stroke that a vindictive God intends,
Is to renounce hypocrisy ; to draw
Thy life upon the pattern of the law ;
To war with pleasure, idoliz'd before ;
To vanquish lust, and wear its yoke no more,
All fasting else, whate'er be the pretence,
Is wooing mercy by renew'd offence.

Hast thou within thee sin, that in old time
Brought fire from heaven, the sex-abusing crime,
Whose horrid perpetration stamps disgrace,
Baboons are free from, upon human race ?
Think on the fruitful and well-water'd spot
That fed the flocks and herds of wealthy Lot,
Where Paradise seem'd still vouchsaf'd on earth,
Burning and scorch'd into perpetual dearth,
Or, in his words who damn'd the base desire,
Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire :
Then nature, injur'd, scandaliz'd, defil'd,
Unveil'd her blushing cheek, look'd on, and smil'd ;
Beheld, with joy, the lovely scene defac'd,
And prais'd the wrath that laid her beauties waste.

Far be the thought from any verse of mine,
And farther still the form'd and fix'd design,

To thrust the charge of deeds that I detest
 Against an innocent, unconscious breast :
 The man that dares traduce, because he can
 With safety to himself, is not a man :
 An individual is a sacred mark,
 Not to be pierc'd in play, or in the dark ;
 But public censure speaks a public foe,
 Unless a zeal for virtue guide the blow.

The priestly brotherhood, devout, sincere,
 From mean self-interest and ambition clear,
 Their hope in heaven, servility their scorn,
 Prompt to persuade, exhort, reprove, and warn,
 Their wisdom pure, and given them from above,
 Their usefulness ensur'd by zeal and love,
 As meek as the man Moses, and withal
 As bold as in Agrippa's presence Paul,
 Should fly the world's contaminating touch,
 Holy and unpolluted :—are thine such ?
 Except a few with Eli's spirit blest,
 Hophni and Phinehas may describe the rest.

Where shall a teacher look, in days like these,
 For ears and hearts that he can hope to please ?
 Look to the poor—the simple and the plain
 Will hear, perhaps, thy salutary strain :
 Humility is gentle, apt to learn,
 Speak but the word, will listen and return.
 Alas, not so ! the poorest of the flock
 Are proud, and set their faces as a rock ;

Denied that earthly opulence they choose,
God's better gift they scoff at and refuse.
The rich, the produce of a nobler stem,
Are more intelligent, at least—try them.
Oh, vain inquiry ! they, without remorse,
Are altogether gone a devious course ;
Where beckoning pleasure leads them, wildly stray ;
Have burst the bands, and cast the yoke away.

Now, borne upon the wings of truth sublime,
Review thy dim original and prime.
This island, spot of unreclaim'd, rude earth,
The cradle, that receiv'd thee at thy birth,
Was rock'd by many a rough Norwegian blast,
And Danish howlings scar'd thee as they pass'd ;
For thou wast born amid the din of arms,
And suck'd a breast that panted with alarms.
While yet thou wast a grovelling, puling chit,
Thy bones not fashion'd, and thy joints not knit,
The Roman taught thy stubborn knee to bow,
Though twice a Cæsar could not bend thee now :
His victory was that of orient light,
When the sun's shafts disperse the gloom of night.
Thy language, at this distant moment, shows
How much the country to the conqueror owes ;
Expressive, energetic, and refin'd,
It sparkles with the gems he left behind :
He brought thy land a blessing when he came ;
He found thee savage, and he left thee tame :
Taught thee to clothe thy pink'd and painted hide,
And grace thy figure with a soldier's pride ;

He sow'd the seeds of order where he went,
Improv'd thee far beyond his own intent,
And, while he rul'd thee by the sword alone,
Made thee at last a warrior like his own.
Religion, if in heavenly truths attir'd,
Needs only to be seen to be admir'd ;
But thine, as dark as witcheries of the night,
Was form'd to harden hearts and shock the sight.
Thy druids struck the well-hung harps they bore
With fingers deeply dy'd in human gore ;
And, while the victim slowly bled to death,
Upon the rolling chords rung out his dying breath.

Who brought the lamp, that with awakening beams
Dispell'd thy gloom, and broke away thy dreams,
Tradition, now decrepit and worn out,
Babbler of ancient fables, leaves a doubt :
But still light reach'd thee ; and those gods of thine,
Woden and Thor, each tottering in his shrine,
Fell, broken and defac'd, at their own door,
As Dagon in Philistia long before.
But Rome, with sorceries and magic wand,
Soon rais'd a cloud that darken'd every land ;
And thine was smother'd in the stench and fog
Of Tyber's marshes and the papal bog.
Then priests, with bulls and briefs, and shaven crowns,
And griping fists, and unrelenting frowns,
Legates and delegates, with powers from hell,
Though heavenly in pretension, fleec'd thee well ;

And to this hour, to keep it fresh in mind,
Some twigs of that old scourge are left behind.*
Thy soldiery, the pope's well manag'd pack,
Were train'd beneath his lash, and knew the smack,
And when he laid them on the scent of blood,
Would hunt a Saracen through fire and flood.
Lavish of life, to win an empty tomb,
That prov'd a mint of wealth, a mine, to Rome,
They left their bones beneath unfriendly skies,
His worthless absolution all the prize !
Thou wast the veriest slave, in days of yore,
That ever dragg'd a chain, or tugg'd an oar.
Thy monarchs, arbitrary, fierce, unjust,
Themselves the slaves of bigotry or lust,
Disdain'd thy counsels ; only in distress
Found thee a goodly sponge for power to press.
Thy chiefs, the lords of many a petty fee,
Provok'd and harass'd, in return plagu'd thee ;
Call'd thee away from peaceable employ,
Domestic happiness and rural joy,
To waste thy life in arms, or lay it down
In causeless feuds and bickerings of their own.
Thy parliaments ador'd, on bended knees,
The sovereignty they were conven'd to please ;
Whate'er was ask'd, too timid to resist,
Complied with, and were graciously dismiss'd ;
And, if some Spartan soul a doubt express'd,
And, blushing at the tameness of the rest,

* Which may be found at Doctor's Commons.

Dar'd to suppose the subject had a choice,
He was a traitor by the general voice.
Oh, slave ! with powers thou didst not dare exert,
Verse cannot stoop so low as thy desert ;
It shakes the sides of splenetic disdain,
Thou self-entitled ruler of the main,
To trace thee to the date when yon fair sea,
That clips thy shores, had no such charms for thee ;
When other nations flew from coast to coast,
And thou hadst neither fleet nor flag to boast.

Kneel now, and lay thy forehead in the dust ;
Blush, if thou canst ; not petrified, thou must ;
Act but an honest and a faithful part ;
Compare what then thou wast with what thou art ;
And, God's disposing providence confess'd,
Obduracy itself must yield the rest.—
Then thou art bound to serve him, and to prove,
Hour after hour, thy gratitude and love.

Has he not hid thee, and thy favour'd land,
For ages safe beneath his sheltering hand,
Given thee his blessing on the clearest proof,
Bid nations leagu'd against thee stand aloof,
And charg'd hostility and hate to roar
Where else they would, but not upon thy shore ?
His power secur'd thee when presumptuous Spain
Baptiz'd her fleet invincible in vain.
Her gloomy monarch, doubtful and resign'd
To every pang that racks an anxious mind,
Ask'd of the waves that broke upon his coast,
What tidings ? and the surge replied—All lost !

And when the Stuart, leaning on the Scot,
Then too much fear'd, and now too much forgot,
Pierc'd to the very centre of the realm,
And hop'd to seize his abdicated helm,
'Twas but to prove how quickly, with a frown,
He that had rais'd thee could have pluck'd thee down.
Peculiar is the grace by thee possess'd,
Thy foes implacable, thy land at rest ;
Thy thunders travel over earth and seas,
And all at home is pleasure, wealth, and ease.
'Tis thus, extending his tempestuous arm,
Thy Maker fills the nations with alarm,
While his own heaven surveys the troubled scene,
And feels no change, unshaken and serene.
Freedom, in other lands scarce known to shine,
Pours out a flood of splendour upon thine ;
Thou hast as bright an interest in her rays
As ever Roman had in Rome's best days.
True freedom is where no restraint is known
That scripture, justice and good sense disown,
Where only vice and injury are tied,
And all from shore to shore is free beside.
Such freedom is—and Windsor's hoary towers
Stood trembling at the boldness of thy powers,
That won a nymph on that immortal plain,
Like her the fabled Phœbus woo'd in vain :
He found the laurel only—happier you,
Th' unfading laurel and the virgin too !*

* Alluding to the grant of Magna Charta, which was extorted from King John by the Barons, at Runnymede, near Windsor.

Now think, if pleasure have a thought to spare ;
If God himself be not beneath her care !
If business, constant as the wheels of time,
Can pause an hour to read a serious rhyme ;
If the new mail thy merchants now receive,
Or expectation of the next, give leave ;
Oh think, if chargeable with deep arrears
For such indulgence gilding all thy years,
How much, though long neglected, shining yet,
The beams of heavenly truth have swell'd the debt !
When persecuting zeal made royal sport
With tortur'd innocence in Mary's court,
And Bonner, blithe as shepherd at a wake,
Enjoy'd the show, and danc'd about the stake ;
The sacred book, its value understood,
Receiv'd the seal of martyrdom in blood.
Those holy men, so full of truth and grace,
Seem, to reflection, of a different race ;
Meek, modest, venerable, wise, sincere,
In such a cause they could not dare to fear ;
They could not purchase earth with such a prize,
Or spare a life too short to reach the skies.
From them to thee convey'd along the tide,
Their streaming hearts pour'd freely when they died ;
Those truths, which neither use nor years impair,
Invite thee, woo thee, to the bliss they share.
What dotage will not vanity maintain ?
What web too weak to catch a modern brain ?
The moles and bats in full assembly find,
On special search, the keen ey'd eagle blind.

And did they dream, and art thou wiser now ?
 Prove it—if better, I submit and bow.
 Wisdom and goodness are twin-born, one heart
 Must hold both sisters, never seen apart.
 So then—as darkness overspread the deep,
 Ere nature rose from her eternal sleep,
 And this delightful earth, and that fair sky,
 Leap'd out of nothing, call'd by the Most High ;
 By such a change thy darkness is made light,
 Thy chaos order, and thy weakness might ;
 And he, whose power mere nullity obeys,
 Who found thee nothing, form'd thee for his praise.
 To praise him is to serve him, and fulfil,
 Doing and suffering, his unquestion'd will ;
 'Tis to believe what men inspir'd of old,
 Faithful, and faithfully inform'd, unfold ;
 Candid and just, with no false aim in view,
 To take for truth what cannot but be true ;
 To learn in God's own school the Christian part,
 And bind the task assign'd thee to thine heart :
 Happy the man there seeking and there found,
 Happy the nation where such men abound !

How shall a verse impress thee ? by what name
 Shall I adjure thee not to court thy shame ?
 By theirs, whose bright example, unimpeach'd,
 Directs thee to that eminence they reach'd—
 Heroes and worthies of days past, thy sires ?
 Or his, who touch'd their hearts with hallow'd fires ?
 Their names, alas ! in vain reproach an age,
 Whom all the vanities they scorn'd, engage ;

And his, that seraphs tremble at, is hung
Disgracefully on every trifier's tongue,
Or serves the champion in forensic war
To flourish and parade with at the bar.
Pleasure herself, perhaps, suggests a plea,
If interest move thee, to persuade e'en thee,
By every charm that smiles upon her face,
By joys possess'd and joys still held in chase,
If dear society be worth a thought,
And if the feast of freedom cloy thee not,
Reflect that these, and all that seems thine own,
Held by the tenure of his will alone,
Like angels in the service of their Lord,
Remain with thee, or leave thee at his word ;
That gratitude and temperance in our use
Of what he gives, unsparing and profuse,
Secure the favour, and enhance the joy,
That thankless waste and wild abuse destroy,

But, above all, reflect—how cheap soe'er
Those rights, that millions envy thee, appear,
And, though resolv'd to risk them, and swim down
The tide of pleasure, heedless of his frown—
That blessings truly sacred, and when given
Mark'd with the signature and stamp of Heaven,
The word of prophecy, those truths divine,
Which make that heaven, if thou desire it, thine,
(Awful alternative ! believ'd, belov'd,
Thy glory ; and thy shame, if unimprov'd)
Are never long vouchsaf'd, if push'd aside
With cold disgust, or philosophic pride ;

And that, judicially withdrawn, disgrace,
Error, and darkness, occupy their place,

A world is up in arms, and thou, a spot
Not quickly found if negligently sought.
Thy soul as ample as thy bounds are small,
Endur'st the brunt, and dar'st defy them all :
And wilt thou join to this bold enterprise
A bolder still, a contest with the skies ?
Remember, if He guard thee and secure,
Whoe'er assails thee, thy success is sure ;
But if he leave thee, though the skill and power
Of nations, sworn to spoil thee and devour,
Were all collected in thy single arm,
And thou could'st laugh away the fear of harm,
That strength would fail, oppos'd against the push
And feeble onset of a pigmy rush.

Say not (and, if the thought of such defence
Should spring within thy bosom, drive it thence)
What nation amongst all my foes is free
From crimes as base as any charg'd on me ?
Their measure fill'd, they, too, shall pay the debt
Which God, though long forborn, will not forget
But know that wrath divine, when most severe,
Makes justice still the guide of his career,
And will not punish, in one mingled crowd,
Them without light, and thee without a cloud.

Muse, hang this harp upon yon aged beech,
Still murmuring with the solemn truths I teach ;

And, while, at intervals, a cold blast sings
Through the dry leaves, and pants upon the strings,
My soul shall sigh in secret, and lament
A nation scourg'd, yet tardy to repent.
I know the warning song is sung in vain ;
That few will hear, and fewer heed the strain :
But, if a sweeter voice, and one design'd
A blessing to my country and mankind,
Reclaim the wandering thousands, and bring home
A flock, so scatter'd, and so wont to roam,
Then place it once again between my knees ;
The sound of truth will then be sure to please :
And truth alone, where'er my life be cast,
In scenes of plenty or the pining waste,
Shall be my chosen theme, my glory to the last. }

HOPE.

doceas iter et sacra ostia pandas.

VIRG. *Æn.* 6.

ASK what is human life—the sage replies,
With disappointment lowering in his eyes,
A painful passage o'er a restless flood,
A vain pursuit of fugitive false good,
A scene of fancied bliss and heart-felt care,
Closing, at last, in darkness and despair.
The poor, inur'd to drudgery and distress,
Act without aim, think little, and feel less,
And no where, but in feign'd Arcadian scenes,
Taste happiness, or know what pleasure means.
Riches are pass'd away from hand to hand,
As fortune, vice, or folly, may command.
As in a dance the pair that take the lead
Turn downward, and the lowest pair succeed,
So shifting and so various is the plan
By which Heaven rules the mix'd affairs of man :
Vicissitude wheels round the motley crowd,
The rich grow poor, the poor become purse-proud ;
Business is labour, and, man's weakness such,
Pleasure is labour too, and tires as much,
The very sense of it foregoes its use,
By repetition pall'd, by age obtuse.

Youth lost in dissipation, we deplore;
Through life's sad remnant, what no sighs restore ;
Our years, a fruitless race without a prize,
Too many, yet too few to make us wise.

Dangling his cane about, and taking snuff,
Lothario cries, What philosophic stuff—
Oh, querulous and weak !—whose useless brain
Once thought of nothing, and now thinks in vain ;
Whose eye, reverted, weeps o'er all the past,
Whose prospect shews thee a disheartening waste ;
Would age in thee resign his wintry reign,
And youth invigorate that frame again,
Renew'd desire would grace with other speech
Joys always priz'd—when plac'd within our reach.

For lift thy palsied head, shake off the gloom
That overhangs the borders of thy tomb,
See nature, gay as when she first began,
With smiles alluring her admirer, man ;
She spreads the morning over eastern hills ;
Earth glitters with the drops the night distils ;
The sun, obedient, at her call appears,
To fling his glories o'er the robe she wears ;
Banks cloth'd with flowers, groves fill'd with sprightly
sounds,
The yellow tilth, green meads, rocks, rising grounds,
Streams edg'd with osiers, fattening every field
Where'er they flow, now seen and now conceal'd ;
From the blue rim, where skies and mountains meet,
Down to the very turf beneath thy feet,

Ten thousand charms, that only fools despise,
Or pride can look at with indifferent eyes,
All speak one language, all with one sweet voice
Cry to her universal realm, Rejoice !
Man feels the spur of passions and desires,
And she gives largely more than he requires ;
Not that, his hours devoted all to care,
Hollow-ey'd abstinence, and lean despair,
The wretch may pine, while to his smell, taste, sight,
She holds a paradise of rich delight ;
But gently to rebuke his awkward fear,
To prove that what she gives she gives sincere,
To banish hesitation, and proclaim
His happiness, her dear, her only aim.
'Tis grave philosophy's absurdest dream,
That Heaven's intentions are not what they seem,
That only shadows are dispens'd below,
And earth has no reality but woe.

Thus things terrestrial wear a different hue,
As youth or age persuades ; and neither true :
So Flora's wreath through colour'd crystal seen,
The rose or lily appears blue or green,
But still th' imputed tints are those alone
The medium represents, and not their own.

To rise at noon, sit slipshod and undress'd,
To read the news, or fiddle, as seems best,
Till half the world comes rattling at his door,
To fill the dull vacuity till four ;
And, just when evening turns the blue vault grey,
To spend two hours in dressing for the day ;

To make the sun a bubble without use,
Save for the fruits his heavenly beams produce ;
Quite to forget, or deem it worth no thought,
Who bids him shine, or if he shine or not ;
Through mere necessity to close his eyes
Just when the larks and when the shepherds rise ;
Is such a life, so tediously the same,
So void of all utility or aim,
That poor JONQUIL, with almost every breath,
Sighs for his exit, vulgarly call'd death ;
For he, with all his follies, has a mind
Not yet so blank, or fashionably blind,
But now and then, perhaps, a feeble ray
Of distant wisdom shoots across his way,
By which he reads, that life without a plan,
As useless as the moment it began,
Serves merely as a soil for discontent
To thrive in ; an incumbrance, ere half spent.
Oh ! weariness beyond what asses feel,
That tread the circuit of the cistern wheel ;
A dull rotation, never at a stay,
Yesterday's face twin image of to-day ;
While conversation, an exhausted stock,
Grows drowsy as the clicking of a clock.
No need, he cries, of gravity stuff'd out
With academic dignity devout,
To read wise lectures—vanity the text !
Proclaim the remedy, ye learned, next ;
For truth, self-evident, with pomp impress'd,
Is vanity surpassing all the rest.

That remedy, not hid in deeps profound,
Yet seldom sought where only to be found,
While passion turns aside from its due scope
Th' inquirer's aim—that remedy is Hope.

Life is his gift, from whom whate'er life needs,
With every good and perfect gift, proceeds ;
Bestow'd on man, like all that we partake,
Royally, freely, for his bounty sake ;
Transient, indeed, as is the fleeting hour,
And yet the seed of an immortal flower ;
Design'd, in honour of his endless love,
To fill with fragrance his abode above ;
No trifle, howsoever short it seem,
And, howsoever shadowy, no dream ;
Its value what no thought can ascertain,
Nor all an angel's eloquence explain.
Men deal with life as children with their play,
Who first misuse, then cast their toys away ;
Live to no sober purpose, and contend
That their Creator had no serious end.
When God and man stand opposite in view,
Man's disappointment must, of course, ensue.
The just Creator condescends to write,
In beams of inextinguishable light,
His names of wisdom, goodness, power and love,
On all that blooms below, or shines above ;
To catch the wandering notice of mankind,
And teach the world, if not perversely blind,
His gracious attributes, and prove the share
His offspring hold in his paternal care.

If, led from earthly things to things divine,
His creature thwart not his august design,
Then praise is heard instead of reasoning pride,
And captious cavil and complaint subside .
Nature, employ'd in her allotted place,
Is handmaid to the purposes of grace ;
By good vouchsaf'd, makes known superior good,
And bliss not seen by blessings understood :
That bliss, reveal'd in scripture, with a glow
Bright as the covenant-ensuring bow,
Fires all his feelings with a noble scorn
Of sensual evil, and thus Hope is born.

Hope sets the stamp of vanity on all
That men have deem'd substantial since the fall,
Yet has the wondrous virtue to educe,
From emptiness itself, a real use ;
And, while she takes, as at a father's hand,
What health and sober appetite demand,
From fading good derives, with chemic art,
That lasting happiness, a thankful heart.
Hope, with uplifted foot set free from earth,
Pants for the place of her ethereal birth,
On steady wings sails through th' immense abyss,
Plucks amaranthine joys from bowers of bliss,
And crowns the soul, while yet a mourner here,
With wreaths like those triumphant spirits wear.
Hope, as an anchor firm and sure, holds fast
The christian vessel, and defies the blast.
Hope ! nothing else can nourish and secure
His new-born virtues, and preserve him pure.

Hope ! let the wretch, once conscious of the joy,
Whom now despairing agonies destroy,
Speak, for he can, and none so well as he,
What treasures centre, what delights, in thee.
Had he the gems, the spices, and the land
That boasts the treasure, all at his command ;
The fragrant grove, th' inestimable mine,
Were light, when weigh'd against one smile of thine.

Though clasp'd and cradled in his nurse's arms,
He shine with all a cherub's artless charms,
Man is the genuine offspring of revolt,
Stubborn and sturdy—a wild ass's colt ;
His passions, like the watery stores that sleep
Beneath the smiling surface of the deep,
Wait but the lashes of a wintry storm,
To frown and roar, and shake his feeble form.
From infancy, through childhood's giddy maze,
Froward at school, and fretful in his plays,
The puny tyrant burns to subjugate
The free republic of the whip-gig state.
If one, his equal in athletic frame,
Or, more provoking still, of nobler name,
Dares step across his arbitrary views,
An Iliad, only not in verse, ensues :
The little Greeks look trembling at the scales,
Till the best tongue, or heaviest hand, prevails.

Now see him launch'd into the world at large.
If priest, supinely droning o'er his charge,
Their fleece his pillow, and his weekly drawl,
Though short, too long, the price he pays for all.

If lawyer, loud whatever cause he plead,
 But proudest of the worst, if that succeed.
 Perhaps a grave physician, gathering fees,
 Punctually paid for lengthening out disease ;
 No COTTON, whose humanity sheds rays
 That make superior skill his second praise.
 If arms engage him, he devotes to sport
 His date of life, so likely to be short.
 A soldier may be any thing, if brave ;
 So may a tradesman, if not quite a knave.
 Such stuff the world is made of ; and mankind,
 To passion, interest, pleasure, whim, resign'd.
 Insist on, as if each were his own pope,
 Forgiveness, and the privilege of Hope.
 But conscience, in some awful silent hour,
 When captivating lusts have lost their power—
 Perhaps when sickness, or some fearful dream,
 Reminds him of religion, hated theme !—
 Starts from the down on which she lately slept,
 And tells of laws despis'd, at least not kept ;
 Shows, with a pointing finger, but no noise,
 A pale procession of past sinful joys,
 All witnesses of blessings foully scorn'd,
 And life abus'd, and not to be suborn'd.
 Mark these, she says ; these, summon'd from afar,
 Begin their march, to meet thee at the bar ;
 There find a Judge inexorably just,
 And perish there, as all presumption must.

Peace be to those (such peace as earth can give)
 Who live in pleasure, dead e'en while they live ;

Born capable, indeed, of heavenly truth ;
 But down to latest age, from earliest youth,
 Their mind a wilderness, through want of care,
 The plough of wisdom never entering there,
 Peace (if insensibility may claim
 A right to the meek honours of her name)
 To men of pedigree, their noble race,
 Emulous, always, of the nearest place
 To any throne, except the throne of grace. }
 (Let cottagers and unenlightened swains
 Revere the laws they dream that Heaven ordains ;
 Resort on Sundays to the house of prayer,
 And ask and fancy they find blessings there.)
 Themselves, perhaps, when weary they retreat
 'T' enjoy cool nature in a country seat,
 'T' exchange the centre of a thousand trades,
 For clumps, and lawns, and temples, and cascades,
 May now and then their velvet cushions take,
 And seem to pray, for good example sake ;
 Judging, in charity no doubt, the town
 Pious enough, and having need of none.
 Kind souls ! to teach their tenantry to prize
 What they, themselves, without remorse, despise &
 Nor hope have they, nor fear, of aught to come—
 As well for them had prophecy been dumb.
 They could have held the conduct they pursue,
 Had Paul of Tarsus liv'd and died a Jew ;
 And truth, propos'd to reasoners wise as they,
 Is a pearl cast—completely cast away.

They die.—Death lends them, pleas'd, and as in sport,
All the grim honours of his ghastly court.
Far other paintings grace the chamber now,
Where late we saw the mimic landscape glow :
The busy heralds hang the sable scene
With mournful 'scutcheons, and dim lamps between,
Proclaim their titles to the crowd around,
But they that wore them move not at the sound ;
The coronet, plac'd idly at their head,
Adds nothing now to the degraded dead,
And e'en the star that glitters on the bier
Can only say—Nobility lies here.
Peace to all such—'twere pity to offend,
By useless censure, whom we cannot mend ;
Life, without hope, can close but in despair—
'Twas there we found them, and must leave them there.

As, when two pilgrims in a forest stray,
Both may be lost, yet each in his own way ;
So fares it with the multitudes beguil'd
In vain opinion's waste and dangerous wild.
Ten thousand rove the brakes and thorns among,
Some eastward, and some westward, and all wrong.
But here, alas ! the fatal difference lies—
Each man's belief is right in his own eyes ;
And he that blames what they have blindly chose
Incurs resentment for the love he shows.

Say, botanist, within whose province fall
The cedar and the hyssop on the wall,

Of all that deck the lanes, the fields, the bowers,
What parts the kindred tribes of weeds and flowers?
Sweet scent, or lovely form, or both combin'd,
Distinguish every cultivated kind;
The want of both denotes a meaner breed,
And Chloë from her garland picks the weed.
Thus hopes of every sort, whatever sect
Esteem them, sow them, rear them, and protect,
If wild in nature, and not duly found,
Gethsemane, in thy dear hallowed ground,
That cannot bear the blaze of scripture light,
Nor cheer the spirit, nor refresh the sight,
Nor animate the soul to christian deeds,
(Oh cast them from thee!) are weeds, arrant weeds.

Ethelred's house, the centre of six ways,
Diverging each from each, like equal rays,
Himself as bountiful as April rains,
Lord paramount of the surrounding plains,
Would give relief of bed and board to none,
But guests that sought it in the appointed ONE.
And they might enter at his open door,
E'en till his spacious hall would hold no more.
He sent a servant forth by every road,
To sound his horn and publish it abroad,
That all might mark—knight, menial, high and low—
An ordinance it concern'd them much to know.
If, after all, some headstrong hardy lout
Would disobey, though sure to be shut out,
Could he, with reason, murmur at his case,
Himself sole author of his own disgrace?

No ! the decree was just and without flaw ;
And he that made, had right to make, the law ;
His sovereign power and pleasure unrestrain'd,
The wrong was his who wrongfully complain'd.

Yet half mankind maintain a churlish strife
With him, the Donor of eternal life,
Because the deed, by which his love confirms
The largess he bestows, prescribes the terms.
Compliance with his will your lot ensures—
Accept it only, and the boon is yours.
And sure it is as kind to smile and give,
As with a frown to say—Do this, and live !
Love is not pedlar's trumpery, bought and sold ;
He *will* give freely, or he *will* withhold ;
His soul abhors a mercenary thought,
And him as deeply who abhors it not ;
He stipulates, indeed, but merely this—
That man will freely take an unbought bliss,
Will trust him for a faithful generous part,
Nor set a price upon a willing heart.
Of all the ways that seem to promise fair,
To place you where his saints his presence share,
This only can ; for this plain cause, express'd
In terms as plain—himself has shut the rest.
But oh the strife, the bickering, and debate,
The tidings of unpurchas'd heaven create !
The flirted fan, the bridle, and the toss,
All speakers, yet all language at a loss.

VOL. I.

K

From stucco'd walls smart arguments rebound ;
 And beaux, adepts in every thing profound,
 Die of disdain, or whistle off the sound. }
 Such is the clamour of rooks, daws and kites,
 Th' explosion of the levell'd tube excites,
 Where mouldering abbey walls o'erhung the glade,
 And oaks, coeval, spread a mournful shade.
 The screaming nations, hovering in mid air,
 Loudly resent the stranger's freedom there,
 And seem to warn him never to repeat
 His bold intrusion on their dark retreat.

Adieu, Vinosà cries, ere yet he sips
 The purple bumper, trembling at his lips,
 Adieu to all morality—if grace
 Make works a vain ingredient in the case !
 The Christian hope is—Waiter, draw the cork—
 If I mistake not—Blockhead ! with a fork !
 Without good works, whatever some may boast,
 Mere folly and delusion—Sir, your toast !
 My firm persuasion is, at least sometimes,
 That Heaven will weigh man's virtues and his crimes
 With nice attention, in a righteous scale,
 And save or damn, as these or those prevail.
 I plant my foot upon this ground of trust,
 And silence every fear with—God is just.
 But if, perchance, on some dull drizzling day,
 A thought intrude, that says, or seems to say,
 If thus th' important cause is to be tried,
 Suppose the beam should dip on the wrong side ;

I soon recover from these needless frights,
And, God is merciful—sets all to rights.
Thus, between justice, as my prime support,
And mercy, fled to as the last resort,
I glide and steal along with heaven in view,
And—pardon me—the bottle stands with you.

I never will believe, the colonel cries,
The sanguinary schemes that some devise,
Who make the good Creator, on their plan,
A being of less equity than man.
If appetite, or what divines call lust,
Which men comply with, e'en because they must,
Be punish'd with perdition, who is pure ?
Then theirs, no doubt, as well as mine, is sure.
If sentence of eternal pain belong
To every sudden slip and transient wrong,
Then Heaven enjoins the fallible and frail
A hopeless task, and damns them if they fail !
My creed (whatever some creed-makers mean
By Athenasian nonsense, or Nicene)
My creed is—he is safe that does his best,
And death's a doom sufficient for the rest.

Right, says an ensign ; and for aught I see,
Your faith and mine substantially agree ;
The best of every man's performance here
Is to discharge the duties of his sphere.
A lawyer's dealings should be just and fair—
Honesty shines with great advantage there

Fasting and prayer sit well upon a priest—
A decent caution and reserve, at least.
A soldier's best is courage in the field,
With nothing here that wants to be conceal'd :
Manly deportment, gallant, easy, gay :
A hand as liberal as the light of day.
The soldier thus endow'd, who never shrinks,
Nor closets up his thought, whate'er he thinks,
Who scorns to do an injury by stealth,
Must go to heaven—and I must drink his health.
Sir Smug, he cries, (for lowest at the board—
Just made fifth chaplain of his patron lord,
His shoulders witnessing, by many a shrug,
How much his feelings suffer'd—sat Sir Smug)
Your office is to winnow false from true ;
Come, prophet, drink, and tell us—What think you ?

Sighing and smiling as he takes his glass,
Which they that woo preferment rarely pass,
Fallible man, the church-bred youth replies,
Is still found fallible, however wise ;
And differing judgments serve but to declare
That truth lies somewhere, if we knew but where.
Of all it ever was my lot to read,
Of critics now alive, or long since dead,
The book, of all the world, that charm'd me most,
Was—well-a-day, the title page was lost !
The writer well remarks, a heart that knows
To take with gratitude what Heaven bestows,
With prudence always ready at our call,
To guide our use of it, is all in all.

Doubtless it is.—To which, of my own store,
I superadd a few essentials more ;
But these, excuse the liberty I take,
I wave just now, for conversation sake.——
Spoke like an oracle, they all exclaim,
And add Right Reverend to Smug's honour'd name !

And yet our lot is given us in a land
Where busy arts are never at a stand ;
Where science points her telescopic eye,
Familiar with the wonders of the sky ;
Where bold inquiry, diving out of sight,
Brings many a precious pearl of truth to light ;
Where naught eludes the persevering quest,
That fashion, taste, or luxury, suggest.

But, above all, in her own light array'd,
See mercy's grand Apocalypse display'd !
The sacred book no longer suffers wrong,
Bound in the fetters of an unknown tongue ;
But speaks with plainness, art could never mend,
What simplest minds can soonest comprehend.
God gives the word—the preachers throng around,
Live from his lips, and spread the glorious sound ;
That sound bespeaks salvation on her way,
The trumpet of a life-restoring day !
'Tis heard where England's eastern glory shines,
And in the gulfs of her Cornubian mines,

And still it spreads. See Germany send forth
 Her sons* to pour it on the farthest north ;
 Fir'd with a zeal peculiar, *they* defy
 The rage and rigour of a polar sky,
 And plant successfully sweet Sharon's rose
 On icy plains, and in eternal snows.

Oh, blest within th' enclosure of your rocks,
 Nor herds have ye to boast, nor bleating flocks ?
 No fertilizing streams your fields divide,
 That show, revers'd, the villas on their side ;
 No groves have ye ; no cheerful sound of bird,
 Or voice of turtle, in your land is heard ;
 Nor grateful eglantine regales the smell
 Of those that walk at evening where ye dwell :
 But winter, arm'd with terrors here unknown,
 Sits absolute on his unshaken throne ;
 Piles up his stores amidst the frozen waste,
 And bids the mountains he has built stand fast
 Beckons the legions of his storms away
 'From happier scenes, to make your land a prey ;
 Proclaims the soil a conquest he has won,
 And scorns to share it with the distant sun.
 —Yet truth is yours, remote, unenvied isle !
 And peace, the genuine offspring of her smile !
 The pride of letter'd ignorance, that binds
 In chains of error our accomplish'd minds,
 That decks, with all the splendour of the true,
 A false religion, is unknown to you.



• The Moravian Missionaries in Greenland. Vide Krantz.

Nature, indeed, vouchsafes, for our delight,
The sweet vicissitudes of day and night ;
Soft airs and genial moisture feed and cheer
Field, fruit, and flower, and every creature here ;
But brighter beams, than his who fires the skies,
Have risen at length on your admiring eyes,
That shoot into your darkest caves the day,
From which our nicer optics turn away.

Here see th' encouragement grace gives to vice,
The dire effect of mercy without price !
What were they ? What some fools are made by art,
They were by nature—atheists, head and heart.
The gross idolatry blind heathens teach
Was too refin'd for them, beyond their reach.
Not e'en the glorious sun—though men revere
The monarch most, that seldom will appear ;
And though his beams, that quicken where they shine,
May claim some right to be esteem'd divine—
Not e'en the sun, desirable as rare,
Could bend one knee, engage one votary there !
They were, what base credulity believes
True Christians are, dissemblers, drunkards, thieves.
The full-gorg'd savage, at his nauseous feast
Spent half the darkness, and snor'd out the rest,
Was one whom justice, on an equal plan,
Denouncing death upon the sins of man,
Might almost have indulg'd with an escape,
Chargeable only with a human shape.

What are they now ?—Morality may spare
Her grave concern, her kind suspicions, there :

The wretch, who once sang wildly, danc'd and laugh'd,
And suck'd in dizzy madness with his draught,
Has wept a silent flood, revers'd his ways,
Is sober, meek, benevolent, and prays ;
Feeds sparingly, communicates his store,
Abhors the craft he boasted of before—
And he that stole, has learnt to steal no more. }
Well spake the prophet, Let the desert sing,
Where sprang the thorn the spiry fir shall spring,
And where unsightly and rank thistles grew,
Shall grow the mirtle and luxuriant yew.

Go now, and with important tone demand
On what foundation virtue is to stand,
If self-exalting claims be turn'd adrift,
And grace be grace indeed, and life a gift.
The poor reclaim'd inhabitant, his eyes
Glistening at once with pity and surprise,
Amaz'd that shadows should obscure the sight
Of one whose birth was in a land of light,
Shall answer, Hope, sweet hope, has set me free,
And made all pleasures else mere dross to me.

These, amidst scenes as waste as if denied
The common care that waits on all beside,
Wild as if nature there, void of all good,
Play'd only gambols in a frantic mood,
(Yet charge not heavenly skill with having plann'd
A play-thing world, unworthy of his hand !)
Can see his love, though secret evil lurks
In all we touch, stamp'd plainly on his works ;

Deem life a blessing with its numerous woes,
Nor spurn away a gift a God bestows.
Hard task, indeed, o'er arctic seas to roam !
Is hope exotic ? grows it not at home ?
Yes, but an object, bright as orient morn,
May press the eye too closely to be born ;
A distant virtue we can all confess,
It hurts our pride and moves our envy less.

Leuconomus (beneath well sounding Greek
I slur a name a poet must not speak)
Stood pilloried on infamy's high stage,
And bore the pelting scorn of half an age ;
The very butt of slander, and the blot
For every dart that malice ever shot.
The man that mention'd *him* at once dismiss'd
All mercy from his lips, and sneer'd and hiss'd ;
His crimes were such as Sodom never knew,
And perjury stood up to swear all true ;
His aim was mischief, and his zeal pretence,
His speech rebellion against common sense ;
A knave, when tried on honesty's plain rule,
And, when by that of reason, a mere fool ;
The world's best comfort was, his doom was pass'd ;
Die when he might, he must be damn'd at last.

Now, truth, perform thine office ; waft aside
The curtain drawn by prejudice and pride,
Reveal (the man is dead) to wondering eyes
This more than monster in his proper guise.

He lov'd the world that hated him : the tear
That dropp'd upon his Bible was sincere :
Assail'd by scandal and the tongue of strife,
His only answer was, a blameless life ;
And he that forg'd, and he that threw the dart,
Had each a brother's interest in his heart !
Paul's love of Christ, and steadiness unbrib'd,
Were copied close in him, and well transcrib'd.
He followed Paul—his zeal a kindred flame,
His apostolic charity the same.
Like him, cross'd cheerfully tempestuous seas,
Forsaking country, kindred, friends, and ease ;
Like him he labour'd, and, like him, content.
To bear it, suffer'd shame where'er he went.

Blush, calumny ! and write upon his tomb,
If honest eulogy can spare thee room,
Thy deep repentance of thy thousand lies,
Which, aim'd at him, have pierc'd th' offended skies ;
And say, Blot out my sin, confess'd, deplor'd,
Against thine image in thy saint, oh Lord !

No blinder bigot, I maintain it still,
Than he who must have pleasure, come what will :
He laughs, whatever weapon truth may draw,
And deems her sharp artillery mere straw.
Scripture, indeed, is plain ; but God and he,
On scripture-ground, are sure to disagree ;
Some wiser rule must teach him how to live,
Than this his Maker has seen fit to give ;
Supple and flexible as Indian cane,
To take the bend his appetites ordain ;

Contriv'd to suit frail nature's crazy case,
 And reconcile his lusts with saving grace.
 By this, with nice precision of design,
 He draws upon life's map a zig-zag line,
 That shows how far 'tis safe to follow sin,
 And where his danger and God's wrath begin.
 By this he forms, as pleas'd he sports along,
 His well pois'd estimate of right and wrong ;
 And finds the modish manners of the day,
 Though loose, as harmless as an infant's play.

Build by whatever plan caprice decrees,
 With what materials, on what ground, you please ;
 Your hope shall stand unblam'd, perhaps admir'd,
 If not that hope the scripture has requir'd.
 The strange conceits, vain projects, and wild dreams,
 With which hypocrisy forever teems,
 (Though other follies strike the public eye,
 And raise a laugh) pass unmolested by ;
 But if, unblameable in word and thought,
 A *man* arise—a man whom God has taught,
 With all Elijah's dignity of tone,
 And all the love of the beloved John—
 To storm the citadels they build in air,
 And smite th' untemper'd wall ; 'tis death to spare !
 To sweep away all refuges of lies,
 And place, instead of quirks themselves devise,
Lama sabacthani before their eyes ;
 To prove, that without Christ, all gain is loss,
 All hope despair, that stands not on his cross ;

Except the few his God may have impress'd,
A tenfold frenzy seizes all the rest.

Throughout mankind, the Christian kind at least,
There dwells a consciousness in every breast,
That folly ends where genuine hope begins,
And he that finds his heaven must lose his sins.
Nature opposes, with her utmost force,
This riving stroke, this ultimate divorce ;
And, while religion seems to be her view,
Hates, with a deep sincerity, *the true* :
For this—of all that ever influenced man,
Since Abel worshipp'd, or the world began—
This only spares no lust ; admits no plea ;
But makes him, if at all, completely free ;
Sounds forth the signal, as she mounts her car,
Of an eternal, universal war ;
Rejects all treaty, penetrates all wiles ;
Scorns, with the same indifference, frowns and smiles ;
Drives through the realms of sin, where riot reels,
And grinds his crown beneath her burning wheels !
Hence all that is in man—pride, passion, art,
Powers of the mind, and feelings of the heart—
Insensible of truth's almighty charms,
Starts at her first approach, and sounds, To arms !
While bigotry, with well dissembled fears,
His eyes shut fast, his fingers in his ears,
Mighty to parry and push by God's word
With senseless noise, his argument the sword,
Pretends a zeal for godliness and grace,
And spits abhorrence in the christian's face.

Parent of hope, immortal truth ! make known
 Thy deathless wreaths and triumphs, all thine own :
 The silent progress of thy power is such,
 Thy means so feeble, and despis'd so much,
 That few believe the wonders thou hast wrought,
 And none can teach them but whom thou hast taught.
 Oh, see me sworn to serve thee, and command
 A painter's skill into a poet's hand !
 That while I, trembling, trace a work divine,
 Fancy may stand aloof from the design,
 And light, and shade, and every stroke, be thine. }

If ever thou hast felt another's pain,
 If ever when he sigh'd hast sigh'd again,
 If ever on thy eye-lid stood the tear
 That pity had engender'd, drop one here !
 This man was happy—had the world's good word,
 And with it every joy it can afford ;
 Friendship and love seem'd tenderly at strife,
 Which most should sweeten his untroubled life ;
 Politely learn'd, and of a gentle race,
 Good breeding and good sense gave all a grace,
 And, whether at the toilette of the fair
 He laugh'd and trifled, made him welcome there ;
 Or, if in masculine debate he shar'd,
 Ensur'd him mute attention and regard.
 Alas, how chang'd !—Expressive of his mind,
 His eyes are sunk, arms folded, head reclin'd ;
 Those awful syllables, hell, death, and sin,
 Though whisper'd, plainly tell what works within ;

That conscience there performs her proper part,
And writes a doomsday sentence on his heart !
Forsaking, and forsaken of all friends,
He now perceives where earthly pleasure ends :
Hard task—for one who lately knew no care,
And harder still, as learnt beneath despair !
His hours no longer pass, unmark'd, away,
A dark importance saddens every day ;
He hears the notice of the clock, perplex'd,
And cries—perhaps eternity strikes next !
Sweet music is no longer music here,
And laughter sounds like madness in his ear :
His grief the world of all her power disarms ;
Wine has no taste, and beauty has no charms ;
God's holy word, once trivial in his view,
Now by the voice of his experience true,
Seems, as it is, the fountain whence alone
Must spring that hope he pants to make his own.
Now let the bright reverse be known abroad ;
Say man's a worm, and power belongs to God.

As when a felon, whom his country's laws
Have justly doom'd for some atrocious cause,
Expects, in darkness and heart-chilling fears,
The shameful close of all his mis-spent years ;
If chance, on heavy pinions slowly borne,
A tempest usher in the dreaded morn,
Upon his dungeon walls the lightning play,
The thunder seems to summon him away,
The warder at the door his key applies,
Shoots back the bolt, and all his courage dies ;

If then, just then, all thoughts of mercy lost,
When hope, long lingering, at last yields the ghost,
The sound of pardon pierce his startled ear,
He drops at once his fetters and his fear ;
A transport glows in all he looks and speaks,
And the first thankful tears bedew his cheeks.
Joy, far superior joy, that much outweighs
The comfort of a few poor added days,
Invades, possesses, and o'erwhelms, the soul
Of him, whom hope has with a touch made whole.
'Tis heaven, all heaven, descending on the wings
Of the glad legions of the King of kings ;
'Tis more—'tis God diffus'd through every part,
'Tis God himself triumphant in his heart !
Oh, welcome now the sun's once hated light,
His noon-day beams were never half so bright.
Not kindred minds alone are call'd t' employ
Their hours, their days, in listening to his joy ;
Unconscious nature, all that he surveys,
Rocks, groves, and streams, must join him in his praise.

These are thy glorious works, eternal truth,
The scoff of wither'd age and beardless youth :
These move the censure and illiberal grin
Of fools that hate thee and delight in sin :
But these shall last when night has quench'd the pole,
And heaven is all departed as a scroll :
And when, as justice has long since decreed,
This earth shall blaze, and a new world succeed,
Then these thy glorious works, and they who share
That hope which can alone exclude despair,

Shall live exempt from weakness and decay,
The brightest wonders of an endless day.

Happy the bard, (if that fair name belong
To him that blends no fable with his song)
Whose lines, uniting, by an honest art,
The faithful monitor's and poet's part,
Seek to delight, that they may mend mankind,
And while they captivate, inform the mind :
Still happier, if he till a thankful soil,
And fruit reward his honourable toil :
But happier far, who comfort those that wait
To hear plain truth at Judah's hallow'd gate :
Their language simple, as their manners meek,
No shining ornaments have they to seek ;
Nor labour they, nor time, nor talents, waste,
In sorting flowers, to suit a fickle taste ;
But, while they speak the wisdom of the skies,
Which art can only darken and disguise,
Th' abundant harvest, recompense divine,
Repays their work—the gleanings only mine.

CHARITY.

*Qua nihil nojus meliusve terris
Fata domare, boniq ; divi,
Nec dabunt, quamvis redeant in aurum
Tempora priscum.*

HOR. Lib. IV. Ode 2.

FAIREST and foremost of the train, that wait
On man's most dignified and happiest state,
Whether we name thee Charity or love,
Chief grace below, and all in all above,
Prosper (I press thee with a powerful plea)
A task I venture on, impell'd by thee :
Oh, never seen but in thy blest effects,
Or felt but in the soul that Heaven selects ;
Who seeks to praise thee, and to make thee known
To other hearts, must have thee in his own.
Come, prompt me with benevolent desires,
Teach me to kindle at thy gentle fires,
And, though disgrac'd and slighted, to redeem
A poet's name, by making thee the theme.

God, working ever on a social plan,
By various ties attaches man to man :

He made at first, though free and unconfin'd,
One man, the common father of the kind ;
That every tribe, though plac'd as he sees best,
Where seas or deserts part them from the rest,
Differing in language, manners, or in face,
Might feel themselves allied to all the race.
When Cook—lamented, and with tears as just
As ever mingled with heroic dust—
Steer'd Britain's oak into a world unknown,
And in his country's glory sought his own,
Wherever he found man, to nature true,
The rights of man were sacred in his view.
He sooth'd with gifts, and greeted with a smile,
'The simple native of the new-found isle ;
He spurn'd the wretch that slighted or withstood
The tender argument of kindred blood,
Nor would endure that any should control
His free born brethren of the southern pole.
But, though some nobler minds a law respect,
That none shall with impunity neglect,
In baser souls unnumber'd evils meet,
To thwart its influence, and its end defeat.
While Cook is lov'd for savage lives he sav'd,
See Cortez odious for a world enslav'd !
Where wast thou then, sweet Charity ? where then,
Thou tutelary friend of helpless men ?
Wast thou in monkish cells and nunneries found,
Or building hospitals on English ground ?
No.—Mammon makes the world his legatee
Through fear, not love ; and Heaven abhors the fee.

Wherever found, (and all men need thy care)
Nor age nor infancy could find thee there.
The hand that slew, till it could slay no more,
Was glued to the sword-hilt with Indian gore.
Their prince, as justly seated on his throne
As vain imperial Philip on his own,
Trick'd out of all his royalty by art,
That stripp'd him bare, and broke his honest heart,
Died, by the sentence of a shaven priest,
For scorning what they taught him to detest.
How dark the veil that intercepts the blaze
Of Heaven's mysterious purposes and ways !
God stood not, though he seem'd to stand, aloof ;
And at this hour, the conqueror feels the proof :
The wreath he won drew down an instant curse,
The fretting plague is in the public purse,
The canker'd spoil corrodes the pining state,
Starv'd by that indolence their minds create.
Oh, could their ancient Incas rise again,
How would they take up Israel's taunting strain !
Art thou too fallen, Iberia ? Do we see
The robber and the murderer weak as we ?
Thou, that hast wasted earth, and dar'd despise
Alike the wrath and mercy of the skies,
Thy pomp is in the grave, thy glory laid
Low in the pits thine avarice has made !
We come with joy from our eternal rest,
To see th' oppressor in his turn oppress'd.
Art thou the god, the thunder of whose hand
Roll'd over all our desolated land,

Shook principalities and kingdoms down,
And made the mountains tremble at his frown ?
The sword shall light upon thy boasted powers,
And waste them, as thy sword has wasted ours.
'Tis thus Omnipotence his law fulfils,
And vengeance executes what justice wills.

Again—the band of commerce was design'd
T' associate all the branches of mankind ;
And, if a boundless plenty be the robe,
Trade is the golden girdle of the globe.
Wise to promote whatever end he means,
God opens fruitful nature's various scenes :
Each climate needs what other climes produce,
And offers something to the general use ;
No land but listens to the common call,
And, in return, receives supply from all.
This genial intercourse, and mutual aid,
Cheers what were else an universal shade,
Calls nature from her ivy-mantled den,
And softens human rock-work into men.
Ingenious art, with her expressive face,
Steps forth to fashion and refine the race ;
Not only fills necessity's demand,
But overcharges her capacious hand :
Capricious taste itself can crave no more
Than she supplies from her abounding store ;
She strikes out all that luxury can ask,
And gains new vigour at her endless task.
Her's is the spacious arch, the shapely spire,
The painter's pencil, and the poet's lyre ;

From her the canvass borrows light and shade,
And verse, more lasting, hues that never fade.
She guides the finger o'er the dancing keys,
Gives difficulty all the grace of ease,
And pours a torrent of sweet notes around,
Fast as the thirsting ear can drink the sound.

These are the gifts of art ; and art thrives most
Where commerce has enrich'd the busy coast.
He catches all improvements in his flight,
Spreads foreign wonders in his country's sight,
Imports what others have invented well,
And stirs his own to match them, or excel.
'Tis thus reciprocating each with each,
Alternately the nations learn and teach ;
While Providence enjoins, to every soul,
An union with the vast terraqueous whole.

Heaven speed the canvass, gallantly unfurl'd
To furnish and accommodate a world,
To give the pole the produce of the sun,
And knit th' unsocial climates into one.—
Soft airs and gentle heavings of the wave
Impel the fleet whose errand is to save,
To succour wasted regions, and replace
The smile of opulence in sorrow's face.—
Let nothing adverse, nothing unforeseen,
Impede the bark that plows the deep serene,
Charg'd with a freight, transcending in its worth
The gems of India, nature's rarest birth,

That flies, like Gabriel on his Lord's commands,
A herald of God's love to pagan lands.
But, ah ! what wish can prosper, or what prayer,
For merchants, rich in cargoes of despair,
Who drive a loathsome traffic, gage, and span,
And buy, the muscles and the bones of man ?
The tender ties of father, husband, friend,
All bonds of nature, in that moment end ;
And each endures, while yet he draws his breath,
A stroke, as fatal as the scythe of death.
The sable warrior, frantic with regret
Of her he loves, and never can forget,
Loses in tears the far receding shore.
But not the thought that they must meet no more ;
Depriv'd of her and freedom at a blow,
What has he left that he can yet forego ?
Yes, to deep sadness sullenly resign'd,
He feels his body's bondage in his mind ;
Puts off his generous nature ; and, to suit
His manners with his fate, puts on the brute.

Oh, most degrading of all ills that wait
On man, a mourner in his best estate !
All other sorrows virtue may endure,
And find submission more than half a cure ;
Grief is itself a medicine, and bestow'd
T' improve the fortitude that bears the load,
To teach the wanderer, as his woes increase,
The path of wisdom, all whose paths are peace ;
But slavery ! virtue dreads it as her grave :
Patience itself is meanness in a slave.

Or, if the will and sovereignty of God
 Bid suffer it awhile, and kiss the rod,
 Wait for the dawning of a brighter day,
 And snap the chain the moment when you may.
 Nature imprints upon whate'er we see,
 That has a heart and life in it—Be free !
 The beasts are charter'd—neither age nor force
 Can quell the love of freedom in a horse :
 He breaks the cord that held him at the rack,
 And, conscious of an unincumber'd back,
 Snuffs up the morning air, forgets the rein,
 Loose fly his forelock and his ample mane ;
 Responsive to the distant neigh he neighs ;
 Nor stops, till, overleaping all delays,
 He finds the pasture where his fellows graze. }

Canst thou, and honour'd with a christian name,
 Buy what is woman-born, and feel no shame ?
 Trade in the blood of innocence, and plead
 Expedience as a warrant for the deed ?
 So may the wolf, whom famine has made bold
 To quit the forest and invade the fold :
 So may the ruffian, who with ghostly glide,
 Dagger in hand, steals close to your bed-side ;
 Not he, but his emergence, forc'd the door,
 He found it inconvenient to be poor.
 Has God then given its sweetness to the cane—
 Unless his laws be trampled on—in vain ?
 Built a brave world, which cannot yet subsist,
 Unless his right to rule it be dismiss'd ?

Impudent blasphemy !—So folly pleads,
And avarice, being judge, with ease succeeds.

But grant the plea—and let it stand for just,
That man make man his prey because he *must* ;
Still there is room for pity to abate,
And soothe, the sorrows of so sad a state.
A Briton knows—or, if he know it not,
The Scripture plac'd within his reach, he ought—
That souls have no discriminating hue,
Alike important in their Maker's view ;
That none are free from blemish since the fall ;
And love divine has paid one price for all.
The wretch, that works and weeps without relief,
Has One that notices his silent grief.
He, from whose hand alone all power proceeds,
Ranks its abuse among the foulest deeds,
Considers *all* injustice with a frown ;
But *marks* the man that treads his fellow down.
Begone !—the whip and bell, in that hard hand,
Are hateful ensigns of usurp'd command,
Not Mexico could purchase kings a claim
To scourge him, weariness his only blame.
Remember, Heaven has an avenging rod—
To smite the poor is treason against God !

Trouble is grudgingly and hardly brook'd,
While life's sublimest joys are overlook'd :
We wander o'er a sun-burnt thirsty soil,
Murmuring and weary of our daily toil,
Forget t' enjoy the palm-tree's offer'd shade,
Or taste the fountain in the neighbouring glade 8

Else who would lose, that had the power t' improve,
Th' occasion of transmuting fear to love ?
Oh, 'tis a godlike privilege to save !
And he that scorns it is himself a slave.
Inform his mind—one flash of heavenly day
Would heal his heart, and melt his chains away.
“ Beauty for ashes ” is a gift indeed !
And slaves, by truth enlarg'd, are doubly freed.
Then would he say, submissive at thy feet,
While gratitude and love made service sweet,
My dear deliverer out of hopeless night,
Whose bonnty bought me but to give me light,
I was a bondman on my native plain ;
Sin forg'd, and ignorance made fast the chain ;
Thy lips have shed instruction, as the dew,
Taught me what path to shun, and what pursue ;
Farewel, my former joys ! I sigh no more
For Africa's once lov'd, benighted shore ;
Serving a benefactor, I am free—
At my best home, if not exil'd from thee.

Some men make gain a fountain, whence proceeds
A stream of liberal and heroic deeds.
The swell of pity, not to be confin'd
Within the scanty limits of the mind,
Disdains the bank, and throws the golden sands,
A rich deposit, on the bordering lands :
These have an ear for his paternal call,
Who makes some rich for the supply of all ;
God's gift with pleasure in his praise employ,
And THORNTON is familiar with the joy.

Oh, could I worship aught beneath the skies
That earth hath seen, or fancy can devise,
Thine altar, sacred liberty, should stand,
Built by no mercenary, vulgar hand,
With fragrant turf, and flowers as wild and fair
As ever dress'd a bank, or scented summer air !
Duly, as ever on the mountain's height
The peep of morning shed a dawning light,
Again, when evening in her sober vest
Drew the grey curtain of the fading west,
My soul should yield thee willing thanks and praise
For the chief blessings of my fairest days :
But that were sacrilege—praise is not thine,
But his who gave thee, and preserves thee mine :
Else I would say, and as I spake bid fly
A captive bird into the boundless sky,
This triple realm adores thee—thou art come
From Sparta hither, and art here at home.
We feel thy force still active, at this hour
Enjoy immunity from priestly power,
While conscience, happier than in ancient years,
Owns no superior but the God she fears.
Propitious spirit ! yet expunge a wrong
Thy rights have suffer'd, and our land, too long.
Teach mercy to ten thousand hearts, that share
The fears and hopes of a commercial care.
Prisons expect the wicked, and were built
To bind the lawless, and to punish guilt ;
But shipwreck, earthquake, battle, fire and flood,
Are mighty mischiefs not to be withstood ;

And honest merit stands on slippery ground,
 Where covert guile and artifice abound.
 Let just restraint, for public peace design'd,
 Chain up the wolves and tigers of mankind ;
 The foe of virtue has no claim to thee—
 But let insolvent innocence go free.

Patron of else the most despis'd of men,
 Accept the tribute of a stranger's pen ;
 Verse, like the laurel, its immortal meed,
 Should be the guerdon of a noble deed ;
 I may alarm thee, but I fear the shame
 (Charity chosen as my theme and aim) }
 I must incur, forgetting HOWARD's name.
 Blest with all wealth can give thee, to resign
 Joys doubly sweet to feelings quick as thine,
 To quit the bliss thy rural scenes bestow,
 To seek a nobler amidst scenes of woe,
 To traverse seas, range kingdoms, and bring home,
 Not the proud monuments of Greece or Rome,
 But knowledge, such as only dungeons teach,
 And only sympathy like thine could reach ;
 That grief, sequester'd from the public stage,
 Might smooth her feathers, and enjoy her cage ;
 Speaks a divine ambition, and a zeal,
 The boldest patriot might be proud to feel.
 Oh that the voice of clamour and debate,
 That pleads for peace till it disturbs the state,
 Were hush'd in favour of thy generous plea—
 The poor thy clients, and Heaven's smile thy fee !

Philosophy, that does not dream or stray,
Walks arm in arm with nature all his way ;
Compasses earth, dives into it, ascends
Whatever steep inquiry recommends,
Sees planetary wonders smoothly roll
Round other systems under her control,
Drinks wisdom at the milky stream of light,
That cheers the silent journey of the night,
And brings, at his return, a bosom charg'd
With rich instruction, and a soul enlarg'd.
The treasur'd sweets of the capacious plan
That heaven spreads wide before the view of man,
All prompt his pleas'd pursuit, and to pursue
Still prompt him, with a pleasure always new ;
He, too, has a connecting power, and draws
Man to the centre of the common cause ;
Aiding a dubious and deficient sight
With a new medium, and a purer light.
All truth is precious, if not all divine :
And what dilates the powers must needs refine.
He reads the skies, and, watching every change,
Provides the faculties an ampler range ;
And wins mankind, as his attempts prevail,
A prouder station on the general scale.
But reason still, unless divinely taught,
Whate'er she learns, learns nothing as she ought ;
The lamp of revelation only shows—
What human wisdom cannot but oppose—
That man, in nature's richest mantle clad,
And grac'd with all philosophy can add,

Though fair without, and luminous within,
Is still the progeny and heir of sin.
Thus taught, down falls the plumage of his pride ;
He feels his need of an unerring guide,
And knows that, falling he shall rise no more,
Unless the power that bade him stand, restore,
This is, indeed, philosophy ; this, known,
Makes wisdom, worthy of the name, his own ;
And without this—whatever he discuss ;
Whether the space between the stars and us,
Whether he measure earth, compute the sea,
Weigh sun-beams, carve a fly, or spit a flea—
The solemn trifter, with his boasted skill,
Toils much, and is a solemn trifler still :
Blind was he born, and, his misguided eyes
Grown dim in trifling studies, blind he dies.
Self-knowledge, truly learn'd, of course implies
The rich possession of a nobler prize ;
For self to self, and God to man, reveal'd,
(Two themes to nature's eye forever seal'd)
Are taught by rays that fly with equal pace
From the same centre of enlightening grace.
Here stay thy foot ;—how copious and how clear
Th' o'erflowing well of Charity springs here !
Hark ! 'tis the music of a thousand rills !
Some through the groves, some down the sloping hills,
Winding a secret or an open course,
And all supplied from an eternal source.
The ties of nature do but feebly bind,
And commerce partially reclaims, mankind ;

Philosophy, without his heavenly guide,
May blow up self-conceit, and nourish pride ;
But, while his province is the reasoning part,
Has still a veil of midnight on his heart :
'Tis truth divine, exhibited on earth,
Gives Charity her being and her birth.

Suppose (when thought is warm, and fancy flows,
What will not argument sometimes suppose ?)
An isle possess'd by creatures of our kind,
Endued with reason, yet by nature blind.
Let supposition lend her aid once more,
And land some grave optician on the shore :
He claps his lens, if haply they may see,
Close to the part where vision ought to be ;
But finds that, though his tubes assist the sight,
They cannot give it, or make darkness light.
He reads wise lectures, and describes aloud
A sense they know not, to the wondering crowd ;
He talks of light and the prismatic hues,
As men of depth in erudition use ;
But all he gains for his harangue is—Well,
What monstrous lies some travellers will tell !

The soul, whose sight all-quickening grace renews,
Takes the resemblance of the good she views,
As diamonds, stript of their opaque disguise,
Reflect the noon-day glory of the skies.
She speaks of HIM, her author, guardian, friend,
Whose love knew no beginning, knows no end,

In language warm as all that love inspires ;
And, in the glow of her intense desires,
Pants to communicate her noble fires. }
She sees a world stark blind to what employs
Her eager thought, and feeds her flowing joys ;
Though wisdom hail them, heedless of her call,
Flies to save some, and feels a pang for all ;
Herself as weak as her support is strong,
She feels that frailty she denied so long ;
And, from a knowledge of her own disease,
Learns to compassionate the sick she sees.
Here see, acquitted of all vain pretence,
The reign of genuine Charity commence.
Though scorn repay her sympathetic tears,
She still is kind, and still she perseveres ;
The truth she loves a sightless world blaspheme—
'Tis childish dotage, a delirious dream !
The danger they discern not they deny ;
Laugh at their only remedy, and die.
But still a soul thus touch'd can never cease,
Whoever threatens war, to speak of peace :
Pure in her aim, and in her temper mild,
Her wisdom seems the weakness of a child.
She makes excuses where she might condemn ;
Revil'd by those that hate her, prays for them ;
Suspicion lurks not in her artless breast ;
The worst suggested, she believes the best ;
Not soon provok'd, however stung and teas'd ;
And, if perhaps made angry, soon appeas'd ;
She rather waves than will dispute her right ;
And, injured, makes forgiveness her delight.

Such was the portrait an apostle drew ;
The bright original was one he knew ;
Heaven held his hand—the likeness must be true. }

When one, that holds communion with the skies,
Has fill'd his urn where these pure waters rise,
And once more mingles with us meaner things,
'Tis e'en as if an angel shook his wings ;
Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide,
That tells us whence his treasures are supplied,
So, when a ship, well freighted with the stores
The sun matures on India's spicy shores,
Has dropt her anchor, and her canvass furl'd
In some safe haven of our western world,
'Twere vain inquiry to what port she went ;
The gale informs us, laden with the scent.

Some seek, when queasy conscience has its qualms,
To lull the painful malady with alms ;
But Charity, not feign'd, intends alone
Another's good—theirs centres in their own ;
And, too short liv'd to reach the realms of peace,
Must cease forever when the poor shall cease.
Flavia, most tender of her own good name,
Is rather careless of her sister's fame :
Her superfluity the poor supplies,
But, if she touch a character, it dies.
The seeming virtue weigh'd against the vice,
She deems all safe, for she has paid the price :
No charity but alms aught values she,
Except in porcelain on her mantle-tree.

How many deeds, with which the world has rung,
From pride, in league with ignorance, have sprung !
But God o'errules all human follies still,
And bends the tough materials to his will.
A conflagration, or a wintry flood,
Has left some hundreds without home or food :
Extravagance and avarice shall subscribe,
While fame and self-complacence are the bribe.
The brief proclaim'd, it visits every pew,
But first the squire's—a compliment but due :
With slow deliberation he unties
His glittering purse—that envy of all eyes !
And, while the clerk just puzzles out the psalm,
Slides guinea behind guinea in his palm ;
Till, finding (what he might have found before)
A smaller piece amidst the precious store,
Pinch'd close between his finger and his thumb,
He half exhibits, and then drops the sum.
Gold, to be sure !—throughout the town 'tis told
How the good squire gives never less than gold.
From motives such as his, though not the best,
Springs in due time supply for the distress'd ;
Not less effectual than what love bestows—
Except that office clips it as it goes.

But lest I seem to sin against a friend,
And wound the grace I mean to recommend,
(Though vice derided with a just design
Implies no trespass against love divine)
Once more I would adopt the graver style—
A teacher should be sparing of his smile.

Unless a love of virtue light the flame,
Satire is, more than those he brands, to blame ;
He hides behind a magisterial air
His own offences, and strips others bare ;
Affects, indeed, a most humane concern,
That men, if gently tutor'd, will not learn ;
That mulish folly, not to be reclaim'd
By softer methods, must be made asham'd ;
But (I might instance in St. Patrick's dean)
Too often rails to gratify his spleen.
Most satirists are, indeed, a public scourge ;
Their mildest physic is a farrier's purge ;
Their acrid temper turns, as soon as stirr'd,
The milk of their good purpose all to curd.
Their zeal begotten, as their works rehearse,
By lean despair upon an empty purse,
The wild assassins start into the street,
Prepar'd to poniard whomsoe'er they meet.
No skill in swordmanship, however just,
Can be secure against a madman's thrust ;
And even virtue, so unfairly match'd,
Although immortal, may be prick'd or scratch'd.
When scandal has new minted an old lie,
Or tax'd invention for a fresh supply,
'Tis call'd a satire, and the world appears
Gathering around it with erected ears :
A thousand names are toss'd into the crowd ;
Some whisper'd softly, and some twang'd aloud ;
Just as the sapience of an author's brain
Suggests it safe or dangerous to be plain.

Strange ! how the frequent interjected dash
Quickens a market, and helps off the trash ;
Th' important letters, that include the rest,
Serve as a key to those that are suppress'd ;
Conjecture gripes the victims in his paw,
The world is charm'd, and Scrib. escapes the law.
So, when the cold damp shades of night prevail,
Worms may be caught by either head or tail ;
Forcibly drawn from many a close recess,
They meet with little pity, no redress ;
Plung'd in the stream, they lodge upon the mud,
Food for the famish'd rovers of the flood.

All zeal for a reform, that gives offence
To peace and charity, is mere pretence :
A bold remark ; but which, if well applied,
Would humble many a towering poet's pride.
Perhaps the man was in a sportive fit,
And had no other play-place for his wit ;
Perhaps, enchanted with the love of fame,
He sought the jewel in his neighbour's shame ;
Perhaps—whatever end he might pursue,
The cause of virtue could not be his view.
At every stroke wit flashes in our eyes ;
The turns are quick, the polish'd points surprise,
But shine with cruel and tremendous charms,
That, while they please, possess us with alarms :
So have I seen, (and hasten'd to the sight
On all the wings of holiday delight)
Where stands that monument of ancient power,
Nam'd with emphatic dignity—the Tower,

Guns, halberts, swords, and pistols, great and small,
In starry forms dispos'd upon the wall.
We wonder, as we gazing stand below,
That brass and steel should make so fine a show !
But, though we praise th' exact designer's skill,
Account them implements of mischief still.

No works shall find acceptance in that day
When all disguises shall be rent away,
That square not truly with the scripture plan,
Nor spring from love to God, or love to man.
As he ordains things, sordid in their birth,
To be resolv'd into their parent earth ;
And, though the soul shall seek superior orbs,
Whate'er this world produces, it absorbs ;
So self starts nothing but what tends apace
Home to the goal where it began the race.
Such as our motive is our aim must be ;
If this be servile, that can ne'er be free :
If self employ us, whatsoe'er is wrought,
We glorify that self, not HIM we ought.
Such virtues had need prove their own reward,
'The Judge of all men owes them no regard.
'True Charity, a plant divinely nurs'd,
Fed by the love from which it rose at first ;
'Thrives against hope ; and, in the rudest scene,
Storms but enliven its unfading green ;
Exuberant is the shadow it supplies ;
Its fruit on earth, its growth above the skies.
To look at HIM, who form'd us and redeem'd ;
So glorious now, though once so disesteem'd ;

To see a God stretch forth his human hand,
 To uphold the boundless scenes of his command ;
 To recollect, that, in a form like ours,
 He bruise'd beneath his feet th' infernal powers,
 Captivity led captive, rose to claim
 The wreath he won so dearly in our name ;
 That, thron'd above all height, he condescends
 To call the few that trust in him his friends ;
 That, in the heaven of heavens, that space he deems
 Too scanty for th' exertion of his beams,
 And shines, as if impatient to bestow
 Life and a kingdom upon worms below ;
 That sight imparts a never-dying flame,
 Though feeble in degree, in kind the same.
 Like him, the soul, thus kindled from above,
 Spreads wide her arms of universal love ;
 And, still enlarg'd as she receives the grace,
 Includes creation in her close embrace.
 Behold a Christian !—and, without the fires
 The Founder of that name alone inspires,
 Though all accomplishment, all knowledge meet,
 To make the shining prodigy complete,
 Whoever boasts that name—behold a cheat !
 Were love, in these, the world's last doting years,
 As frequent as the want of it appears,
 The churches warm'd, they would no longer hold
 Such frozen figures, stiff as they are cold :
 Relenting forms would lose their power, or cease ;
 And e'en the dipt and sprinkled live in peace :

Each heart would quit its prison in the breast,
And flow in free communion with the rest.
The statesman, skill'd in projects dark and deep,
Might burn his useless Machiavel, and sleep ;
His budget, often fill'd, yet always poor,
Might swing at ease behind his study door,
No longer prey upon our annual rents,
Or scare the nation with its big contents :
Disbanded legions freely might depart,
And slaying man would cease to be an art.
No learned disputants would take the field,
Sure not to conquer and sure not to yield ;
Both sides deceiv'd, if rightly understood,
Pelting each other for the public good.
Did Charity prevail, the press would prove
A vehicle of virtue, truth, and love ;
And I might spare myself the pains to show
What few can learn, and all suppose they know.
Thus have I sought to grace a serious lay
With many a wild, indeed, but flowery spray,
In hopes to gain, what else I must have lost,
Th' attention pleasure has so much engross'd.
But if, unhappily deceiv'd, I dream,
And prove too weak for so divine a theme,
Let Charity forgive me a mistake
That zeal, not vanity, has chanc'd to make,
And spare the poet for his subject's sake. }

CONVERSATION.



*Nam neq ; me tantum venientis sibilus austri,
Nec percussa juvant fluctû tam litora, nec quæ
Saxosas inter decurrunt flumina valles.*

VIRG. Ecl. 5.

THOUGH nature weigh our talents, and dispense
To every man his modicum of sense,
And Conversation, in its better part,
May be esteem'd a gift and not an art,
Yet much depends, as in the tiller's toil,
On culture, and the sowing of the soil.
Words learn'd by rote a parrot may rehearse,
But talking is not always to converse ;
Not more distinct from harmony divine,
The constant creaking of a country sign.
• As alphabets in ivory employ,
Hour after hour, the yet unletter'd boy,
Sorting and puzzling with a deal of glee,
Those seeds of science, call'd his A B C ;
So language in the mouths of the adult,
Witness its insignificant result,

Too often proves an implement of play,
A toy to sport with, and pass time away.
Collect at evening what the day brought forth,
Compress the sum into its solid worth,
And, if it weigh th' importance of a fly,
The scales are false, or Algebra a lie.
Sacred interpreter of human thought,
How few respect or use thee as they ought !
But all shall give account of every wrong,
Who dare dishonour or defile the tongue ;
Who prostitute it in the cause of vice,
Or sell their glory at a market price ;
Who vote for hire, or point it with lampoon—
The dear-bought placeman, and the cheap buffoon,

There is a pruriance in the speech of some,
Wrath stays him, or else God would strike them dumb ;
His wise forbearance has their end in view ;
They fill their measure, and receive their due.
The heathen law-givers of ancient days,
Names almost worthy of a Christian's praise,
Would drive them forth from the resort of men,
And shut up every satyr in his den.
Oh, come not ye near innocence and truth,
Ye worms that eat into the bud of youth !
Infectious as impure, your blighting power
Taints in its rudiments the promis'd flower ;
Its odour perish'd and its charming hue,
Thenceforth 'tis hateful, for it smells of you.
Not e'en the vigorous and headlong rage
Of adolescence, or a firmer age,

Affords a plea, allowable or just,
For making speech the pamperer of lust ;
But, when the breath of age commits the fault,
'Tis nauseous as the vapour of a vault.
So wither'd stumps disgrace the sylvan scene,
No longer fruitful, and no longer green ;
The sapless wood, divested of the bark,
Grows fungous, and takes fire at every spark.

Oaths terminate, as Paul observes, all strife—
Some men have surely then a peaceful life !
Whatever subject occupy discourse,
The feats of Vestris, or the naval force,
Asseveration, blustering in your face,
Makes contradiction such a hopeless case :
In every tale they tell, or false or true,
Well known, or such as no man ever knew,
They fix attention, heedless of your pain,
With oaths, like rivets, forc'd into the brain ;
And e'en when sober truth prevails throughout,
They swear it, till affirmance breeds a doubt.
A Persian, humble servant of the sun,
Who, though devout, yet bigotry had none,
Hearing a lawyer grave in his address,
With adjurations every word impress,
Suppos'd the man a bishop, or at least,
God's name so much upon his lips, a priest ;
Bow'd at the close with all his graceful airs,
And begg'd an interest in his frequent prayers.

Go, quit the rank to which ye stood preferr'd,
Henceforth associate in one common herd ;
Religion, virtue, reason, common sense,
Pronounce your human form a false pretence ;
A mere disguise, in which a devil lurks,
Who yet betrays his secret by his works.

Ye powers who rule the tongue, if such there are,
And make colloquial happiness your care,
Preserve me from the thing I dread and hate—
A duel in the form of a debate.
The clash of arguments and jar of words,
Worse than the mortal brunt of rival swords,
Decide no question with their tedious length,
(For opposition gives opinion strength)
Divert the champions, prodigal of breath,
And put the peaceably-dispos'd to death.
Oh, thwart me not, Sir Soph, at every turn,
Nor carp at every flaw you may discern ;
Though syllogisms hang not on my tongue,
I am not surely always in the wrong !
'Tis hard, if all is false that I advance—
A fool must now and then be right by chance.
Not that all freedom of dissent I blame ;
No—there I grant the privilege I claim.
A disputable point is no man's ground ;
Rove where you please, 'tis common all around.
Discourse may want an animated—No,
To brush the surface, and to make it flow ;
But still remember, if you mean to please,
To press your point with modesty and ease.

The mark, at which my juster aim I take,
Is contradiction for its own dear sake.
Set your opinion at whatever pitch,
Knots and impediments make something hitch.
Adopt his own, 'tis equally in vain,
Your thread of argument is snapt again ;
The wrangler, rather than accord with you,
Will judge himself deceiv'd, and prove it too.
Vociferated logic kills me quite ;
A noisy man is always in the right—
I twirl my thumbs, fall back into my chair,
Fix on the wainscot a distressful stare,
And, when I hope his blunders are all out,
Reply discreetly—To be sure—no doubt !

DUBIOUS is such a scrupulous good man—
Yes—you may catch him tripping if you can.
He would not, with a peremptory tone,
Assert the nose upon his face his own ;
With hesitation admirably slow,
He humbly hopes—presumes—it may be so.
His evidence, if he were call'd by law
To swear to some enormity he saw,
For want of prominence and just relief,
Would hang an honest man, and save a thief.
Through constant dread of giving truth offence,
He ties up all his hearers in suspense ;
Knows what he knows, as if he knew it not,
What he remembers seems to have forgot ;
His sole opinion, whatsoe'er befall,
Centring at last in having none at all.

Yet though he tease and balk your listening ear,
He makes one useful point exceeding clear ;
Howe'er ingenious, on his darling theme,
A sceptic in philosophy may seem,
Reduc'd to practice, his beloved rule
Would only prove him a consummate fool ;
Useless in him alike both brain and speech,
Fate having plac'd all truth above his reach,
His ambiguities his total sum,
He might as well be blind, and deaf, and dumb.

Where men of judgment creep and feel their way,
The positive pronounce without dismay ;
Their want of light and intellect supplied
By sparks absurdity strikes out of pride :
Without the means of knowing right from wrong,
They always are decisive, clear and strong.
Where others toil with philosophic force,
Their nimble nonsense takes a shorter course ;
Flings at your head conviction in the lump,
And gains remote conclusions at a jump.
Their own defect, invisible to them,
Seen in another, they at once condemn ;
And, though self-idoliz'd in every case,
Hate their own likeness in a brother's face.
The cause is plain, and not to be denied,
The proud are always most provok'd by pride.
Few competitions but engender spite ;
And those the most, where neither has a right.

The point of honour has been deem'd of use,
To teach good manners and to curb abuse.

Admit it true, the consequence is clear,
Our polish'd manners are a mask we wear,
And at the bottom barbarous still and rude ;
We are restrain'd, indeed, but not subdued.
The very remedy, however sure,
Springs from the mischief it intends to cure,
And savage in its principle appears,
Tried, as it should be, by the fruit it bears.
'Tis hard, indeed, if nothing will defend
Mankind from quarrels but their fatal end ;
That now and then a hero must decease,
That the surviving world may live in peace.
Perhaps, at last, close scrutiny may show
The practice dastardly, and mean, and low ;
That men engage in it compell'd by force :
And fear, not courage, is its proper source.
The fear of tyrant custom, and the fear
Lest fops should censure us, and fools should sneer.
At least to trample on our Maker's laws,
And hazard life for any or no cause,
To rush into a fix'd eternal state,
Out of the very flames of rage and hate,
Or send another shivering to the bar,
With all the guilt of such unnatural war,
Whatever use may urge, or honour plead,
On reason's verdict, is a madman's deed.
Am I to set my life upon a throw,
Because a bear is rude and surly ? No—
A moral, sensible, and well-bred man
Will not affront me, and no other can.

Were I empower'd to regulate the lists,
They should encounter with well-loaded fists ;
A Trojan combat would be something new.
Let DARES beat ENTELLUS' black and blue !
Then each might show, to his admiring friends,
In honourable bumps his rich amends,
And carry, in contusions of his skull,
A satisfactory receipt in full.

A story, in which native humour reigns,
Is often useful, always entertains :
A graver fact, enlisted on your side,
May furnish illustration, well applied :
But sedentary weavers of long tales
Give me the fidgets, and my patience fails.
'Tis the most asinine employ on earth,
To hear them tell of parentage and birth,
And echo conversations, dull and dry,
Embellish'd with—*He said*, and, *So said I*.
At every interview their route the same,
The repetition makes attention lame ;
We bustle up with unsuccessful speed,
And in the saddest part, cry—*Droll indeed !*
The path of narrative with care pursue,
Still making probability your clue ;
On all the vestiges of truth attend,
And let *them* guide you to a decent end.
Of all ambitions man may entertain,
The worst that can invade a sickly brain
Is that which angles hourly for surprise,
And baits its hook with prodigies and lies.

Credulous infancy, or age as weak,
Are fittest auditors for such to seek,
Who to please others will themselves disgrace ;
Yet please not, but affront you to your face.
A great retailer of this curious ware,
Having unloaded and made many stare,
Can this be true ?—an arch observer cries.
Yes, (rather moved) I saw it with these eyes !
Sir ! I believe it on that ground alone ;
I could not, had I seen it with my own.

A tale should be judicious, clear, succinct ;
The language plain, and incidents well link'd ;
Tell not as new what every body knows ;
And, new or old, still hasten to a close ;
There, centring in a focus round and neat,
Let all your rays of information meet.
What neither yields us profit nor delight,
Is like a nurse's lullaby at night ;
Guy Earl of Warwick and fair Eleanore,
Or giant-killing Jack, would please me more.

The pipe, with solemn interposing puff,
Makes half a sentence at a time enough ;
The dozing sages drop the drowsy strain,
Then pause, and puff—and speak, and pause again.
Such often, like the tube they so admire,
Important triflers ! have more smoke than fire.
Pernicious weed ! whose scent the fair annoys,
Unfriendly to society's chief joys,
Thy worst effect is, banishing for hours
The sex whose presence civilizes ours :

Thou art, indeed, the drug a gardner wants,
To poison vermin that infest his plants ;
But are we so to wit and beauty blind,
As to despise the glory of our kind,
And show the softest minds and fairest forms
As little mercy as he grubs and worms ?
They dare not wait the riotous abuse,
Thy thirst-creating steams at length produce,
When wine has given indecent language birth,
And forc'd the flood-gates of licentious mirth ;
For sea-born Venus her attachment shows,
Still to that element from which she rose,
And with a quiet, which no fumes disturb,
Sips meek infusions of a milder herb.

Th' emphatic speaker dearly loves t' oppose,
In contact inconvenient, nose to nose,
Is if the gnomon on his neighbour's phiz,
Touch'd with a magnet, had attracted his.
His whisper'd theme, dilated, and at large,
Proves after all a wind-gun's airy charge,
An extract of his diary—no more,
A tasteless journal of the day before.
He walk'd abroad, o'ertaken in the rain
Call'd on a friend, drank tea, stept home again,
Resum'd his purpose, had a world of talk
With one he stumbled on, and lost his walk.
I interrupt him with a sudden bow,
Adieu, dear Sir ! lest you should lose it now.

I cannot talk with civet in the room,
A fine puss-gentleman that's all perfume ;

The sight's enough—no need to smell a beau—
Who thrusts his nose into a raree-show ;
His odoriferous attempts to please
Perhaps might prosper with a swarm of bees ;
But we, that make no honey, though we sting,
Poets, are sometimes apt to maul the thing.
'Tis wrong to bring into a mix'd resort,
What makes some sick, and others *a-la-mort* ;
An argument of cogence, we may say,
Why such an one should keep himself away.

A graver coxcomb we may sometimes see,
Quite as absurd, though not so light as he :
A shallow brain behind a serious mask,
An oracle within an empty cask,
The solemn fop ; significant and budge ;
A fool with judges, amongst fools a judge.
He says but little, and that little said
Owes all its weight, like loaded dice, to lead.
His wit invites you by his looks to come,
But when you knock it never is at home :
'Tis like a parcel sent you by the stage,
Some handsome present, as your hopes presage ;
'Tis heavy, bulky, and bids fair to prove
An absent friend's fidelity and love,
But when unpack'd your disappointment groans,
To find it stuff'd with brick-bats, earth, and stones.

Some men employ their health, an ugly trick,
In making known how oft they have been sick,

And give us, in recitals of disease,
A doctor's trouble, but without the fees ;
Relate how many weeks they kept their bed,
How an emetic or cathartic sped ;
Nothing is slightly touch'd, much less forgot,
Nose, ears, and eyes, seem present on the spot.
Now the distemper, spite of draught or pill,
Victorious seem'd, and now the doctor's skill ;
And now—alas, for unforeseen mishaps !
They put on a damp night-cap and relapse ;
They thought they must have died they were so bad—
Their peevish hearers almost wish they had.

Some fretful tempers wince at every touch,
You always do too little or too much ;
You speak with life, in hopes to entertain,
Your elevated voice goes through the brain ;
You fall at once into a lower key,
That's worse—the drone-pipe of a humble-bee.
The southern sash admits too strong a light,
You rise and drop the curtain—now it's night.
He shakes with cold—you stir the fire and strive
To make a blaze—that's roasting him alive.
Serve him with venison, and he chooses fish ;
With soal—that's just the sort he would not wish.
He takes what he at first profess'd to loath,
And in due time feeds heartily on both ;
Yet still, o'erclouded with a constant frown,
He does not swallow, but he gulps it down.
Your hope to please him, vain on every plan,
Himself should work that wonder, if he can—

Alas ! his efforts double his distress,
He likes yours little, and his own still less.
Thus always teasing others, always teas'd,
His only pleasure is—to be displeas'd.

I pity bashful men, who feel the pain
Of fancied scorn and undeserv'd disdain,
And bear the marks, upon a blushing face,
Of needless shame and self-impos'd disgrace.
Our sensibilities are so acute,
The fear of being silent makes us mute.
We sometimes think we could a speech produce,
Much to the purpose, if our tongues were loose ;
But, being tried, it dies upon the lip,
Faint as a chicken's note that has the pip :
Our wasted oil unprofitably burns,
Like hidden lamps in old sepulchral urns.
Few Frenchmen of this evil have complain'd ;
It seems as if we Britons were ordain'd,
By way of wholesome curb upon our pride,
To fear each other, fearing none beside.
The cause, perhaps, inquiry may descry,
Self-searching with an introverted eye,
Conceal'd within an unsuspected part,
The vainest corner of our own vain heart :
Forever aiming at the world's esteem,
Our self-importance ruins its own scheme ;
In other eyes our talents rarely shone,
Become at length so splendid in our own,
We dare not risk them into public view,
Lest they miscarry of what seems their due.

True modesty is a discerning grace,
And only blushes in the proper place;
But counterfeit is blind, and skulks through fear,
Where 'tis a shame to be asham'd t' appear :
Humility the parent of the first ;
The last by vanity produc'd and nurst.
The circle form'd, we sit in silent state,
Like figures drawn upon a dial-plate ;
Yes ma'am and no ma'am, utter'd softly, show
Every five minutes how the minutes go ;
Each individual suffering a constraint
Poetry may, but colours cannot, paint ;
And, if in close committee on the sky,
Reports it hot or cold, or wet or dry ;
And finds a changing clime a happy source
Of wise reflection and well-tim'd discourse.
We next inquire, but softly and by stealth,
Like conservators of the public health,
Of epidemic throats, if such there are,
And coughs, and rheums, and phthisic, and catarrh.
That theme exhausted, a wide chasm ensues,
Fill'd up at last with interesting news :
Who danc'd with whom, and who are like to wed,
And who is hang'd, and who is brought to bed ;
But fear to call a more important cause,
As if 'twere treason against English laws.
The visit paid, with ecstasy we come,
As from a seven years transportation, home,
And there resume an unembarrass'd brow,
Recovering what we lost we know not how,

The faculties that seem'd reduc'd to naught,
Expression, and the privilege of thought.

The reeking, roaring hero of the chase,
I give him over as a desperate case.
Physicians write in hopes to work a cure,
Never, if honest ones, when death is sure ;
And though the fox he follows may be tam'd,
A mere fox follower never is reclaim'd.
Some farrier should prescribe his proper course,
Whose only fit companion is his horse,
Or if, deserving of a better doom,
The noble beast judge otherwise, his groom.
Yet even the rogue that serves him, though he stand
To take his honour's orders, cap in hand,
Prefers his fellow-grooms, with much good sense,
Their skill a truth, his master's a pretence.
If neither horse nor groom affect the squire,
Where can at last his jockeyship retire ?
Oh to the club, the scene of savage joys,
The school of coarse good fellowship and noise ;
There, in the sweet society of those
Whose friendship from his boyish years he chose,
Let him improve his talent if he can,
Till none but beasts acknowledge him a man.

Man's heart had been impenetrably seal'd,
Like theirs that cleave the flood or graze the field,
Had not his Maker's all bestowing hand
Given him a soul, and bade him understand ;

The reasoning power vouchsaf'd of course inferr'd
The power to clothe that reason with his word ;
For all is perfect that God works on earth,
And he that gives conception aids the birth.
If this be plain, 'tis plainly understood,
What uses of his boon the giver would.
The mind, dispatch'd upon her busy toil,
Should range where Providence has blest the soil ;
Visiting every flower with labour meet,
And gathering all her treasures sweet by sweet,
She should imbue the tongue with what she sips,
And shed the balmy blessing on the lips,
That good diffus'd, may more abundant grow,
And speech may praise the power that bids it flow.
Will the sweet warbler of the live-long night,
'That fills the listening lover with delight,
Forget his harmony, with rapture heard,
To learn the twittering of a meaner bird,
Or make the parrot's mimicry his choice,
That odious libel on a human voice ?
No—nature unsophisticate by man,
Starts not aside from her Creator's plan ;
The melody that was at first design'd
To cheer the rude forefathers of mankind,
Is, note for note, deliver'd in our ears,
In the last scene of her six thousand years :
Yet fashion, leader of a chattering train,
Whom man for his own hurt permits to reign,
Who shifts and changes all things but his shape,
And would degrade her votary to an ape,

The fruitful parent of abuse and wrong,
Holds an usurp'd dominion o'er his tongue ;
There sits and prompts him with his own disgrace,
Prescribes the theme, the tone, and the grimace,
And, when accomplish'd in her wayward school,
Calls gentleman whom she has made a fool.

'Tis an unalterable fix'd decree
That none could frame or ratify but she,
That heaven and hell, and righteousness and sin,
Snares in his path, and foes that lurk within,
God and his attributes (a field of day
Where 'tis an angel's happiness to stray)
Fruits of his love and wonders of his might,
Be never nam'd in ears esteem'd polite.
That he who dares, when she forbids, be grave,
Shall stand proscrib'd a madman or a knave,
A close designer not to be believ'd,
Or, if excus'd that charge, at least deceiv'd.
Oh folly worthy of the nurse's lap,
Give it the breast, or stop its mouth with pap !
It is incredible, or can it seem

A dream to any except those that dream,
That man should love his Maker, and *that* fire,
Warming his heart, should at his lips transpire ?
Know then, and modesty let fall your eyes,
And veil your daring crest that braves the skies ;
That air of insolence affronts your God,
You need his pardon, and provoke his rod :
Now, in a posture that becomes you more
Than that heroic strut assum'd before,

Know, your arrears with every hour accrue,
For mercy shown, while wrath is justly due.
The time is short, and there are souls on earth,
Though future pain may serve for present mirth,
Acquainted with the woes that fear or shame,
By fashion taught, forbade them once to name,
And, having felt the pangs you deem a jest,
Have prov'd them truths too big to be express'd :
Go, seek on revelation's hallowed ground,
Sure to succeed, the remedy they found ;
Touch'd by that Power that you have dar'd to mock,
That makes seas stable, and dissolves the rock,
Your heart shall yield a life-renewing stream,
That fools, as you have done, shall call a dream.

It happen'd, on a solemn even-tide,
Soon after HE that was our surety died,
Two bosom friends, each pensively inclin'd,
The scene of all those sorrows left behind,
Sought their own village, busied as they went,
In musings worthy of the great event :
They spake of him they lov'd, of him whose life,
Though blameless, had incurr'd perpetual strife,
Whose deeds had left, in spite of hostile arts,
A deep memorial graven on their hearts.
The recollection, like a vein of ore,
The farther trac'd, enrich'd them still the more ;
They thought him, and they justly thought him, one
Sent to do more than he appear'd t' have done ;
T' exalt a people, and to place them high
Above all else, and wonder'd he should die.

Ere yet they brought their journey to an end,
A stranger join'd them, courteous as a friend,
And ask'd them, with a kind engaging air,
What their affliction was, and begg'd a share.
Inform'd, he gather'd up the broken thread,
And, truth and wisdom gracing all he said,
Explain'd, illustrated, and search'd so well,
The tender theme on which they chose to dwell,
That reaching home, the night, they said, is near,
We must not now be parted, sojourn here.
The new acquaintance soon became a guest,
And made so welcome at their simple feast,
He blest the bread, but vanish'd at the word,
And left them both exclaiming, 'Twas the Lord !
Did not our hearts feel all he deign'd to say ?
Did they not burn within us by the way ?

Now theirs was converse such as it behoves
Man to maintain, and such as God approves :
Their views, indeed, were indistinct and dim,
But yet successful, being aim'd at HIM.
Christ and his character their only scope,
Their object, and their subject, and their hope,
They felt what it became them much to feel,
And, wanting him to loose the sacred seal,
Found him as prompt as their desire was true,
To spread the new-born glories in their view.
Well—what are ages and the lapse of time,
Match'd against truths, as lasting as sublime ?
Can length of years on God himself exact,
Or make that fiction which was once a fact ?

No—marble and recording brass decay,
And like the graver's memory pass away ;
The works of man inherit, as is just,
Their author's frailty, and return to dust ;
But truth divine forever stands secure,
Its head is guarded as its base is sure ;
Fix'd in the rolling flood of endless years,
The pillar of th' eternal plan appears,
The raging storm and dashing wave defies,
Built by that Architect who built the skies.
Hearts may be found that harbour at this hour
That love of Christ, in all its quickening power ;
And lips, unstain'd by folly or by strife,
Whose wisdom, drawn from the deep well of life,
Tastes of its healthful origin, and flows
A Jordan for th' ablution of our woes.
O days of heaven, and nights of equal praise,
Serene and peaceful as those heavenly days,
When souls drawn upwards, in communion sweet,
Enjoy the stillness of some close retreat,
Discourse, as if releas'd and safe at home,
Of dangers past and wonders yet to come,
And spread the sacred treasures of the breast
Upon the lap of covenanted rest.

What, always dreaming over heavenly things,
Like angel-heads in stone with pigeon-wings ?
Canting and whining out all day the word,
And half the night ? fanatic and absurd !
Mine be the friend less frequent in his prayers,
Who makes no bustle with his soul's affairs,

Whose wit can brighten up a wintry day,
And chase the splenetic dull hours away ;
Content on earth in earthly things to shine,
Who waits for heaven ere he becomes divine,
Leaves saints t' enjoy those altitudes they teach,
And plucks the fruit plac'd more within his reach.

Well spoken, Advocate of sin and shame,
Known by thy bleating—Ignorance thy name.
Is sparkling wit the world's exclusive right,
The fix'd fee-simple of the vain and light ?
Can hopes of heaven, bright prospects of an hour,
That come to waft us out of sorrow's power,
Obscure or quench a faculty that finds
Its happiest soil in the serenest minds ?
Religion curbs indeed its wanton play,
And brings the trifler under rigorous sway,
But gives it usefulness unknown before,
And, purifying, makes it shine the more.
A Christian's wit is inoffensive light,
A beam that aids, but never grieves the sight ;
Vigorous in age as in the flush of youth,
'Tis always active on the side of truth ;
Temperance and peace ensure its healthful state,
And make it brightest at its latest date.
Oh I have seen (nor hope perhaps in vain,
Ere life go down, to see such sights again)
A veteran warrior in the Christian field,
Who never saw the sword he could not wield ;
Grave without dulness, learned without pride,
Exact, yet not precise, though meek, keen-ey'd ;

A man that would have foil'd, at their own play,
A dozen would-be's of the modern day ;
Who, when occasion justified its use,
Had wit as bright, as ready to produce,
Could fetch from records of an earlier age,
Or from philosophy's enlighten'd page,
His rich materials, and regale your ear
With strains it was a privilege to hear :
Yet, above all, his luxury supreme,
And his chief glory, was the gospel theme ;
There he was copious as old Greece or Rome,
His happy eloquence seem'd there at home,
Ambitious not to shine or to excel,
But to treat justly what he lov'd so well.

It moves me more perhaps than folly ought,
When some green heads, as void of wit as thought,
Suppose *themselves* monopolists of sense,
And wiser men's ability, pretence.
Though time will wear us and we must grow old,
Such men are not forgot as soon as cold,
Their fragrant memory will outlast their tomb,
Embalm'd forever in its own perfume :
And, to say truth, though in its early prime,
And when unstain'd with any grosser crime,
Youth has a sprightliness and fire to boast,
That in the valley of decline are lost,
And virtue with peculiar charms appears,
Crown'd with the garland of life's blooming years ;
Yet age, by long experience well inform'd,
Well read, well temper'd, with religion warm'd,

That fire abated which impels rash youth,
Proud of his speed to overshoot the truth,
As time improves the grape's authentic juice,
Mellows and makes the speech more fit for use,
And claims a reverence in its shortening day,
That 'tis an honour and a joy to pay.
The fruits of age, less fair, are yet more sound,
Than those a brighter season pours around ;
And, like the stores autumnal suns mature,
Through wintry rigours unimpair'd endure.

What is fanatic frenzy, scorn'd so much,
And dreaded more than a contagious touch ?
I grant it dangerous, and approve your fear,
That fire is catching if you draw too near ;
But sage observers oft mistake the flame,
And give true piety that odious name.
To tremble (as the creature of an hour
Ought at the view of an Almighty Power)
Before his presence, at whose awful throne,
All tremble, in all worlds, except your own,
To supplicate his mercy, love his ways,
And prize them above pleasure, wealth, or praise,
Though common sense allow'd a casting voice,
And, free from bias, must approve the choice,
Convicts a man fanatic in th' extreme,
And wild as madness in the world's esteem.
But that disease, when soberly defin'd,
Is the false fire of an o'erheated mind ;
It views the truth with a distorted eye,
And either warps or lays it useless by ;

'Tis narrow, selfish, arrogant, and draws
Its sordid nourishment from man's applause ;
And, while at heart sin unrelinquish'd lies,
Presumes itself chief favourite of the skies.
'Tis such a light as putrefaction breeds
In fly-blown flesh whereon the maggot feeds,
Shines in the dark, but, usher'd into day,
The stench remains, the lustre dies away.

True bliss, if man may reach it, is compos'd
Of hearts in union mutually disclos'd ;
And farewell else all hope of pure delight,
Those hearts should be reclaim'd, renew'd, upright.
Bad men, profaning friendship's hallowed name,
Form, in its stead, a covenant of shame,
A dark confederacy against the laws
Of virtue, and religion's glorious cause :
They build each other up with dreadful skill,
As bastions set point-blank against God's will ;
Enlarge and fortify the dread redoubt,
Deeply resolv'd to shut a Saviour out ;
Call legions up from hell to back the deed ;
And, curst with conquest, finally succeed.
But souls that carry on a blest exchange
Of joys they meet with in their heavenly range,
And with a fearless confidence make known
The sorrows sympathy esteems its own,
Daily derive increasing light and force
From such communion in their pleasant course,
Feel less the journey's roughness and its length,
Meet their opposers with united strength,

And, one in heart, in interest, and design,
Gird up each other to the race divine.

But Conversation, choose what theme we may,
And chiefly when religion leads the way,
Should flow, like waters after summer showers,
Not as if rais'd by mere mechanic powers.
The Christian, in whose soul, though now distress'd,
Lives the dear thought of joys he once possess'd,
When all his glowing language issued forth,
With God's deep stamp upon its current worth,
Will speak without disguise, and must impart,
Sad as it is, his undissembling heart,
Abhors constraint, and dares not feign a zeal,
Or seem to boast a fire he does not feel.
The song of Sion is a tasteless thing,
Unless, when rising on a joyful wing,
The soul can mix with the celestial bands,
And give the strain the compass it demands.

Strange tidings these to tell a world who treat
All but their own experience as deceit !
Will they believe, (though credulous enough
To swallow much upon much weaker proof)
That there are blest inhabitants of earth,
Partakers of a new ethereal birth,
Their hopes, desires, and purposes estrang'd
From things terrestrial, and divinely chang'd,
Their very language of a kind that speaks
The soul's sure interest in the good she seeks,

Who deal with scripture, its importance felt,
As Tully with philosophy once dealt,
And in the silent watches of the night,
And through the scenes of toil-renewing light,
The social walk, or solitary ride,
Keep still the dear companion at their side ?
No—shame upon a self-disgracing age,
God's work may serve an ape upon a stage
With such a jest as fill'd with hellish glee
Certain invisibles as shrewd as he ;
But veneration or respect finds none,
Save from the subjects of that work alone.
The world grown old, her deep discernment shows,
Claps spectacles on her sagacious nose,
Peruses closely the true Christian's face,
And finds it a mere mask of sly grimace,
Usurps God's office, lays his bosom bare,
And finds hypocrisy close lurking there,
And, serving God herself through mere constraint,
Concludes his unfeign'd love of him, a feint.
And yet, God knows, look human nature through,
(And in due time the world shall know it too)
That since the flowers of Eden felt the blast,
That after man's defection laid all waste,
Sincerity towards th' heart-searching God
Has made the new-born creature her abode,
Nor shall be found in unregenerate souls,
Till the last fire burn all between the poles.
Sincerity ! Why 'tis his only pride ;
Weak and imperfect in all grace beside,

He knows that God demands his heart entire,
And gives him all his just demands require.
Without it, his pretensions were as vain,
As, having it, he deems the world's disdain ;
That great defect would cost him not alone
Man's favourable judgment, but his own ;
His birth-right shaken, and no longer clear,
Than while his conduct proves his heart sincere.
Retort the charge, and let the world be told
She boasts a confidence she does not hold ;
That, conscious of her crimes, she feels instead
A cold misgiving, and a killing dread ;
That, while in health, the ground of her support
Is madly to forget that life is short ;
That sick she trembles knowing she must die,
Her hope presumption, and her faith a lie ;
That while she dotes, and dreams that she believes,
She mocks her Maker, and herself deceives,
Her utmost reach, historical assent,
The doctrines warpt to what they never meant ;
The truth itself is in her head as dull
And useless, as a candle in a skull,
And all her love of God a groundless claim,
A trick upon the canvass, painted flame.
Tell her again, the sneer upon her face,
And all her censures of the work of grace
Are insincere, meant only to conceal
A dread she would not, yet is forc'd to feel ;
That in her heart the Christian she reveres,
And while she seems to scorn him, only fears.

A poet does not work by square or line,
As smiths and joiners perfect a design ;
At least we moderns, our attention less,
Beyond th' example of our sires, digress,
And claim a right to scamper and run wide,
Wherever chance, caprice, or fancy guide.
The world and I fortuitously met ;
I ow'd a trifle, and have paid the debt ;
She did me wrong, I recompens'd the deed,
And, having struck the balance, now proceed.
Perhaps, however, as some years have pass'd
Since she and I convers'd together last,
And I have liv'd recluse in rural shades,
Which seldom a distinct report pervades,
Great changes and new manners have occur'd,
And blest reforms that I have never heard,
And she may now be as discreet and wise,
As once absurd in all discerning eyes.
Sobriety, perhaps, may now be found,
Where once intoxication press'd the ground ;
The subtle and injurious may be just,
And he grown chaste that was the slave of lust ;
Arts, once esteem'd, may be with shame dismiss'd ;
Charity may relax the miser's fist ;
The gamester may have cast his cards away,
Forgot to curse, and only kneel to pray.
It has indeed been told me (with what weight,
How credibly, 'tis hard for me to state)
That fables old, that seem'd forever mute,
Reviv'd, are hastening into fresh repute,

And gods and goddesses discarded long,
Like useless lumber, or a stroller's song,
Are bringing into vogue their heathen train,
And Jupiter bids fair to rule again ;
That certain feasts are instituted now,
Where Venus hears the lover's tender vow ;
That all Olympus through the country roves,
To consecrate our few remaining groves,
And echo learns politely to repeat
The praise of names for ages obsolete ;
That having prov'd the weakness, it should seem,
Of revelation's ineffectual beam,
To bring the passions under sober sway,
And give the moral springs their proper play,
They mean to try what may at last be done
By stout substantial gods of wood and stone,
And whether Roman rites may not produce
The virtues of old Rome for English use.
May such success attend the pious plan,
May Mercury once more embellish man,
Grace him again with long-forgotten arts,
Reclaim his taste, and brighten up his parts,
Make him athletic as in days of old,
Learn'd at the bar, in the palæstra bold,
Divest the rougher sex of female airs,
And teach the softer not to copy theirs :
The change shall please, nor shall it matter aught
Who works the wonder, if it be but wrought.
'Tis time, however, if the case stand thus,
For us plain folks, and all who side with us,

To build our altar, confident and bold,
And say as stern Elijah said of old—
The strife now stands upon a fair award,
If Israel's Lord be God, then serve the Lord :
If he be silent, faith is all a whim,
Then Baal is the God, and worship him.

Digression is so much in modern use,
Thought is so rare, and fancy so profuse,
Some never seem so wide of their intent,
As when returning to the theme they meant ;
As mendicants, whose business is to roam,
Make every parish, but their own, their home.
Though such continual zig-zags in a book,
Such drunken reelings have an awkward look,
And I had rather creep to what is true,
Than rove and stagger with no mark in view ;
Yet to consult a little, seem'd no crime,
The freakish humor of the present time :
But now to gather up what seems dispers'd,
And touch the subject I design'd at first,
May prove, though much beside the rules of art,
Best for the public, and my wisest part.
And first, let no man charge me that I mean
To clothe in sable every social scene,
And give good company a face severe,
As if they met around a father's bier ;
For tell some men, that pleasure all their bent,
And laughter all their work, is life mis-spent,
Their wisdom bursts into this sage reply,
Then mirth is sin, and we should always cry.

To find the medium asks some share of wit,
And therefore 'tis a mark fools never hit.
But though life's valley be a vale of tears,
A brighter scene beyond that vale appears,
Whose glory, with a light that never fades,
Shoots between scatter'd rocks and opening shades,
And, while it shows the land the soul desires,
The language of the land she seeks, inspires.
Thus touch'd, the tongue receives a sacred cure
Of all that was absurd, profane, impure ;
Held within modest bounds, the tide of speech
Pursues the course that truth and nature teach ;
No longer labours merely to produce
The pomp of sound, or tinkle without use
Where'er it winds, the salutary stream,
Sprightly and fresh, enriches every theme,
While all the happy man possess'd before,
The gift of nature, or the classic store,
Is made subservient to the grand design,
For which Heaven form'd the faculty divine.
So, should an idiot, while at large he strays,
Find the sweet lyre on which an artist plays,
With rash and awkward force the chords he shakes,
And grins with wonder at the jar he makes ;
But let the wise and well-instructed hand
Once take the shell beneath his just command,
In gentle sounds it seems as it complain'd
Of the rude injuries it late sustain'd,
Till, tun'd at length to some immortal song,
It sounds JEHOVAH's name, and pours his praise along.

RETIREMENT.

studius florens ignobilis otii.

VIRG. Geor. Lib. 4.

HACKNEY'D in business, wearied at that car
Which thousands, once fast chain'd to, quit no more,
But which, when life at ebb runs weak and low,
All wish, or seem to wish, they could forego ;
The statesman, lawyer, merchant, man of trade,
Pants for the refuge of some rural shade,
Where, all his long anxieties forgot,
Amid the charms of a sequester'd spot,
Or recollected only to gild o'er
And add a smile to what was sweet before,
He may possess the joys he thinks he sees,
Lay his old age upon the lap of ease,
Improve the remnant of his wasted span,
And, having liv'd a trifler, die a man.
Thus conscience pleads her cause within the breast,
Though long rebell'd against, not yet suppress'd,
And calls a creature form'd for God alone,
For Heaven's high purposes, and not his own ;
Calls him away from selfish ends and aims,
From what debilitates and what inflames,

From cities, humming with a restless crowd,
Sordid as active, ignorant as loud,
Whose highest praise is that they live in vain,
The dupes of pleasure, or the slaves of gain,
Where works of man are cluster'd close around,
And works of God are hardly to be found,
To regions, where, in spite of sin and woe,
Traces of Eden are still seen below,
Where mountain, river, forest, field, and grove,
Remind him of his Maker's power and love.
'Tis well if, look'd for at so late a day,
In the last scene of such a senseless play,
True wisdom will attend his feeble call,
And grace his action ere the curtain fall.
Souls that have long despis'd their heavenly birth,
Their wishes all impregnated with earth,
For three-score years employ'd with ceaseless care
In catching smoke and feeding upon air,
Conversant only with the ways of men,
Rarely redeem the short remaining ten.
Inveterate habits choke th' unfruitful heart,
Their fibres penetrate its tenderest part,
And, draining its nutritious powers to feed
Their noxious growth, starve every better seed.

Happy, if full of days—but happier far,
If, ere we yet discern life's evening star,
Sick of the service of a world that feeds
Its patient drudges with dry chaff and weeds,
We can escape from custom's idiot sway,
To serve the Sovereign we ware born t' obey.

Then sweet to muse upon his skill display'd
(Infinite skill) in all that he has made !
To trace, in nature's most minute design,
The signature and stamp of power divine,
Contrivance intricate, express'd with ease,
Where unassisted sight no beauty sees,
The shapely limb and lubricated joint,
Within the small dimensions of a point,
Muscle and nerve miraculously spun,
His mighty work, who speaks and it is done,
Th' invisible in things scarce seen reveal'd,
To whom an atom is an ample field :
To wonder at a thousand insect forms,
These hatch'd, and those resuscitated worms,
New life ordain'd and brighter scenes to share,
Once prone on earth, now buoyant upon air.
Whose shape would make them, had they bulk and
size,
More hideous foes than fancy can devise ;
With helmet heads and dragon scales adorn'd,
The mighty myriads, now securely scorn'd,
Would mock the majesty of man's high birth,
Despise his bulwarks, and unpeople earth ;
Then with a glance of fancy to survey,
Far as the faculty can stretch away,
Ten thousand rivers pour'd at his command
From urns that never fail through every land ;
These like a deluge with impetuous force,
Those winding modestly a silent course ;
The cloud-surmounting Alps, the fruitful vales ;
Seas on which every nation spreads her sails ;

The sun, a world whence other worlds drink light ;
The crescent moon, the diadem of night ;
Stars countless, each in his appointed place,
Fast anchor'd in the deep abyss of space—
At such a sight to catch the poet's flame,
And with a rapture like his own exclaim,
These are thy glorious works, thou Source of good,
How dimly seen, how faintly understood !
Thine, and upheld by thy paternal care,
This universal frame, thus wondrous fair ;
Thy power divine, and bounty beyond thought,
Ador'd and prais'd in all that thou hast wrought.
Absorb'd in that immensity I see,
I shrink abash'd, and yet aspire to thee ;
Instruct me, guide me to that heavenly day
Thy words more clearly than thy works display,
That, while thy truths my grosser thoughts refine,
I may resemble thee, and call thee mine.

Oh blest proficiency ! surpassing all
That men erroneously their glory call,
The recompense that arts or arms can yield,
The bar, the senate, or the tented field.
Compar'd with this sublimest life below,
Ye kings and rulers, what have courts to show ?
Thus studied, us'd, and consecrated thus,
On earth what is, seems form'd indeed for us ;
Not as the plaything of a froward child,
Fretful unless diverted and beguil'd,
Much less to feed and fan the fatal fires
Of pride, ambition, or impure desires,

But as a scale by which the soul ascends
 From mighty means to more important ends,
 Securely, though by steps but rarely trod,
 Mounts from inferior beings up to God,
 And sees, by ~~no~~ fallacious light or dim,
 Earth made for man, and man himself for him.

Not that I mean t' approve, or would enforce,
 A superstitious and monastic course :
 Truth is not local ; God alike pervades
 And fills the world of traffic and the shades,
 And may be fear'd amidst the busiest scenes,
 Or scorn'd where business never intervenes.
 But 'tis not easy with a mind like ours,
 Conscious of weakness in its noblest powers,
 And in a world where, other ills apart,
 The roving eye misleads the careless heart,
 To limit thought, by nature prone to stray
 Wherever freakish fancy points the way ;
 To bid the pleadings of self-love be still,
 Resign our own, and seek our Maker's will ;
 To spread the page of scripture, and compare
 Our conduct with the laws engraven there ;
 To measure all that passes in the breast,
 Faithfully, fairly, by that sacred test ;
 To dive into the secret deeps within,
 To spare no passion and no favourite sin,
 And search the themes, important above all,
 Ourselves and our recovery from our fall.
 But leisure, silence, and a mind releas'd
 From anxious thoughts how wealth may be increas'd,

How to secure in some propitious hour
 The point of interest or the post of power,
 A soul serene, and equally retir'd
 From objects too much dreaded or desir'd,
 Safe from the clamours of perverse dispute,
 At least are friendly to the great pursuit.

Opening the map of God's extensive plan,
 We find a little isle, this life of man ;
 Eternity's unknown expanse appears
 Circling around and limiting his years.
 The busy race examine, and explore
 Each creek and cavern of the dangerous shore,
 With care collect what in their eyes excels,
 Some shining pebbles, and some weeds and shells ;
 Thus laden, dream that they are rich and great,
 And happiest he that groans beneath his weight :
 The waves o'ertake them in their serious play,
 And every hour sweeps multitudes away ;
 They shriek and sink, survivors start and weep,
 Pursue their sport, and follow to the deep.
 A few forsake the throng ; with lifted eyes
 Ask wealth of heaven, and gain a real prize—
 Truth, wisdom, grace, and peace like that above,
 Seal'd with HIS signet whom they serve and love ;
 Scorn'd by the rest, with patient hope they wait
 A kind release from their imperfect state,
 And, unregretted, are soon snatch'd away
 From scenes of sorrow into glorious day.

Not these alone prefer a life recluse,
 Who seek retirement for its proper use ;

The love of change that lives in every breast,
Genius, and temper, and desire of rest,
Discordant motives in one centre meet,
And each inclines its votary to retreat.
Some minds by nature are averse to noise,
And hate the tumult half the world enjoys,
The lure of avarice, or the pompous prize
That courts display before ambitious eyes ;
The fruits that hang on pleasure's flowery stem,
Whate'er enchants them, are no snares to them.
To them the deep recess of dusky groves,
Or forest where the deer securely roves,
The fall of waters, and the song of birds,
And hills that echo to the distant herds,
Are luxuries excelling all the glare
The world can boast, and her chief favourites share.
With eager step, and carelessly array'd,
For such a cause the poet seeks the shade,
From all he sees he catches new delight,
Pleas'd fancy claps her pinions at the sight,
The rising or the setting orb of day,
The clouds that flit, or slowly float away,
Nature in all the various shapes she wears,
Frowning in storms, or breathing gentle airs,
The snowy robe her wintry state assumes,
Her summer heats, her fruits, and her perfumes—
All, all alike transport the glowing bard,
Success in rhyme his glory and reward.
Oh nature ! whose Elysian scenes disclose
His bright perfections at whose word they rose,

Next to that Power who form'd thee and sustains,
Be thou the great inspirer of my strains.
Still, as I touch the lyre, do thou expand
Thy genuine charms, and guide an artless hand,
That I may catch a fire but rarely known,
Give useful light, though I should miss renown,
And, poring on thy page, whose every line
Bears proof of an intelligence divine,
May feel a heart enrich'd by what it pays,
That builds its glory on its Maker's praise.
Woe to the man whose wit disclaims its use,
Glittering in vain, or only to seduce,
Who studies nature with a wanton eye,
Admires the work, but slips the lesson by;
His hours of leisure and recess employs,
In drawing pictures of forbidden joys,
Retires to blazon his own worthless name,
Or shoot the careless with a surer aim.

The lover, too, shuns business and alarms,
Tender idolater of absent charms.
Saints offer nothing in their warmest prayers,
That he devotes not with a zeal like theirs;
'Tis consecration of his heart, soul, time,
And every thought that wanders, is a crime.
In sighs he worships his supremely fair,
And weeps a sad libation in despair,
Adores a creature, and, devout in vain,
Wins in return an answer of disdain.
As woodbine weds the plant within her reach,
Rough elm, or smooth grain'd ash, or glossy beech,

In spiral rings ascends the trunk, and lays
Her golden tassels on the leafy sprays,
But does a mischief while she lends a grace,
Straitening its growth by such a strict embrace—
So love, that clings around the noblest minds,
Forbids th' advancement of the soul he binds ;
The suitor's air indeed he soon improves,
And forms it to the taste of her he loves,
Teaches his eyes a language, and no less
Refines his speech and fashions his address :
But farewell promises of happier fruits,
Manly designs, and learning's grave pursuits ;
Girt with a chain he cannot wish to break,
His only bliss is sorrow for her sake :
Who will may pant for glory and erect,
Her smile his aim, all higher aims farewell !
Thyrsis, Alexis, or whatever name
May least offend against so pure a flame,
Though sage advice of friends the most sincere
Sounds harshly in so delicate an ear,
And lovers of all creatures, tame or wild,
Can least brook management, however mild,
Yet let a poet (poetry disarms
The fiercest animals with magic charms)
Risk an intrusion on thy pensive mood,
And woo and win thee to thy proper good.
Pastoral images and still retreats,
Umbrageous walks and solitary seats,
Sweet birds in concert with harmonious streams,
Soft airs, nocturnal vigils, and day dreams,

Are all enchantments in a case like thine,
 Conspire against thy peace with one design;
 Sooth thee to make thee but a surer prey,
 And feed the fire that wastes thy powers away.
 Up—God has form'd thee with a wiser view,
 Not to be lead in chains, but to subdue,
 Calls thee to cope with enemies, and first
 Points out a conflict with thyself, the worst.
 Woman, indeed, a gift he would bestow
 When he design'd a paradise below,
 The richest earthly boon his hands afford,
 Deserves to be belov'd, but not ador'd.
 Post away swiftly to more active scenes,
 Collect the scatter'd truths that study gleans,
 Mix with the world, but with its wiser part,
 No longer give an image all thine heart;
 Its empire is not here, nor is it thine,
 'Tis God's just claim, prerogative divine.

Virtuous and faithful HEBERDEN ! whose skill
 Attempts no task it cannot well fulfil,
 Gives melancholy up to nature's care,
 And sends the patient into purer air.
 Look where he comes—in this embower'd alcove—
 Stand close conceal'd, and see a statue move:
 Lips busy, and eyes fix'd, foot falling slow,
 Arms hanging idly down, hands clasp'd below,
 Interpret to the marking eye distress,
 Such as its symptoms can alone express.
 That tongue is silent now ; that silent tongue
 Could argue once, could jest or join the song,

Could give advice, could censure or commend,
 Or charm the sorrows of a drooping friend;
 Renounc'd alike its office and its sport,
 Its brisker and its graver strains fall short;
 Both fail beneath a fever's secret sway,
 And, like a summer brook, are past away.
 This is a sight for pity to peruse,
 Till she resembles faintly what she views,
 Till sympathy contract a kindred pain,
 Pierc'd with the woes that she laments in vain.
 This, of all maladies that man infects,
 Claims most compassion, and receives the least.
 Job felt it, when he groan'd beneath the rod
 And the barb'd arrows of a frowning God;
 And such emollients as his friends could spare,
 Friends such as his for modern Jobs prepare.
 Blest, rather curst, with hearts that never feel,
 Kept snug in caskets of close-hammer'd steel,
 With mouths made only to grin wide and eat,
 And minds that deem decided pain a treat,
 With limbs of British oak, and nerves of wire,
 And wit that puppet-prompters might inspire,
 Their sovereign nostrum is a clumsy joke,
 Our pangs enforc'd with God's severest stroke:
 But, with a soul that ever felt the sting
 Of sorrow; sorrow is a sacred thing;
 Not to molest, or irritate, or raise
 A laugh at his expense, is slender praise;
 He that has not usurp'd the name of man
 Does all, and deems too little all, he can,

T' assuage the throbbings of the fester'd part,
And stanch the bleedings of a broken heart.
'Tis not, as heads that never ache suppose,
Forgery of fancy, and a dream of woes ;
Man is a harp whose chords elude the sight,
Each yielding harmony dispos'd aright ;
The screws revers'd (a task which if he please,
God in a moment executes with ease)
Ten thousand thousand strings at once go loose,
Lost till he tune them, all their power and use.
Then neither heathy wilds, nor scenes as fair
As ever recompens'd the peasant's care,
Nor soft declivities with tufted hills,
Nor view of waters turning busy mills,
Parks in which art preceptress nature weds,
Nor gardens interspers'd with flowery beds,
Nor gales that catch the scent of blooming groves,
And waft it to the mourner as he roves,
Can call up life into his faded eye,
That passes all he sees unheeded by :
No wounds like those a wounded spirit feels,
No cure for such, till God who makes them, heals.
And thou, sad sufferer under nameless ill,
That yields not to the touch of human skill,
Improve the kind occasion, understand
A Father's frown, and kiss his chastening hand :
To thee the day-spring, and the blaze of noon,
The purple evening and resplendent moon,
The stars that, sprinkled o'er the vault of night,
Seem drops descending in a shower of light,

Shine not, or undesir'd and hated shine,
 Seen through the medium of a cloud-like thine;
 Yet seek HIM, in his favour life is found,
 All bliss beside—a shadow or a sound.
 Then heaven, eclips'd so long, and this dull earth,
 Shall seem to start into a second birth;
 Nature, assuming a more lovely face,
 Borrowing a beauty from the works of grace,
 Shall be desir'd and overlook'd no more,
 Shall fill thee with delights unfelt before,
 Impart to things inanimate a voice,
 And bid her mountains and her hills rejoice;
 The sound shall run along the winding vales,
 And thou enjoy an Eden ere it falls.

Ye groves (the statesman at his desk exclaiming,
 Sick of a thousand disappointed aims)
 My patrimonial treasure and my pride,
 Beneath your shades your gray possessor hide,
 Receive me languishing for that repose
 The servant of the public never knows.
 Ye saw me once (ah, those regretted days
 When boyish innocence was all my praise!)
 Hour after hour delightfully allot
 To studies then familiar, since forgot,
 And cultivate a taste for ancient song,
 Catching its ardour as I mus'd along;
 Nor seldom, as propitious Heaven might send,
 What once I valued and could boast—a friend,
 Where witnesses how cordially I press'd
 His undissembling virtue to my breast;

Receive me now, not uncorrupt as then,
 Nor guiltless of corrupting other men,
 But vers'd in arts that, while they seem to stay
 A falling empire, hasten its decay.
 To the fair haven of my native home,
 The wreck of what I was, fatigu'd, I come ;
 For once I can approve the patriot's voice,
 And make the course he recommends, my choice ;
 We meet at last in one sincere desire,
 His wish and mine both prompt me to retire.
 'Tis done—he steps into the welcome chaise,
 Lolls at his ease behind four handsome bays,
 That whirl away from business and debate
 The disencumber'd Atlas of the state.
 Ask not the boy, who, when the breeze of morn
 First shakes the glittering drops from every thorn,
 Unfolds his flock, then under bank or bush
 Sits linking cherry-stones or plaiting rush,
 How fair is freedom ! he was always free :
 To carve his rustic name upon a tree,
 To snare the mole, or with ill-fashion'd hook
 To draw th' incautious minnow from the brook,
 Are life's prime pleasures in his simple view,
 His flock the chief concern he ever knew—
 She shines but little in his heedless eyes,
 The good we never miss we rarely prize :
 But ask the noble drudge in state affairs,
 Escap'd from office and its constant cares,
 What charms he sees in freedom's smile express'd,
 In freedom lost so long, now reposess'd ;

The tongue whose strains were cogent as commands,
Rever'd at home, and felt in foreign lands,
Shall own itself a stammerer in that cause,
Or plead its silence as its best applause.
He knows indeed, that, whether dress'd or rude,
Wild without art, or artfully subdu'd,
Nature in every form inspires delight;
But never mark'd her with so just a sight.
Her hedge-row shrubs, a variegated store,
With woodbine and wild roses mantled o'er,
Green balks, and furrow'd lands, the stream that
spreads

Its cooling vapour o'er the dewy meads,
Downs that almost escape th' inquiring eye,
That melt and fade into the distant sky,
Beauties he lately slighted as he past,
Seem all created since he travell'd last.
Master of all th' enjoyments he design'd,
No rough annoyance rankling in his mind,
What early philosophic hours he keeps,
How regular his meals, how sound he sleeps!
Not sounder he that on the mainmast head,
While morning kindles with a windy red,
Begins a long look-out for distant land,
Nor quits, till evening watch, his giddy stand,
Then swift descending with a seaman's haste,
Slips to his hammoc and forgets the blast.
He chooses company, but not the squire's,
Whose wit is rudeness, whose good breeding tires;
Nor yet the parson's, who would gladly come,
Obsequious when abroad, though proud at home;

Nor can he much affect the neighbouring peer,
Whose toe of emulation treads too near ;
But wisely seeks a more convenient friend,
With whom, dismissing forms, he may unbend !
A man whom marks of condescending grace
Teach, while they flatter him, his proper place ;
Who comes when call'd, and at a word withdraws,
Speaks with reserve, and listens with applause ;
Some plain mechanic, who, without pretence
To birth or wit, nor gives nor takes offence ;
On whom he rests well pleas'd his weary powers,
And talks and laughs away his vacant hours.
The tide of life, swift always in its course,
May run in cities with a brisker force,
But no where with a current so serene,
Or half so clear, as in the rural scene.
Yet how fallacious is all earthly bliss,
What obvious truths the wisest heads may miss ;
Some pleasures live a month, and some a year,
But short the date of all we gather here ;
No happiness is felt, except the true,
That does not charm thee more for being new.
This observation, as it chanc'd, not made,
Or if the thought occur'd, not duly weigh'd,
He sighs—for, after all, by slow degrees,
The spot he lov'd has lost the power to please ;
To cross his ambling pony day by day,
Seems at the best but dreaming life away ;
The prospect, such as might enchant despair,
He views it not, or sees no beauty there ;

With aching heart, and discontented looks,
Returns at noon to billiards or to books,
But feels, while grasping at his faded joys,
A secret thirst of his renounc'd employs.
He chides the tardiness of every post,
Pants to be told of battles won or lost,
Blames his own indolence, observes, though late,
'Tis criminal to leave a sinking state,
Flies to the levee, and, receiv'd with grace,
Kneels, kisses hands, and skines again in place.

Suburban villas, highway-side retreats,
That dread th' encroachment of our growing streets,
Tight boxes, neatly sash'd, and in a blaze
With all a July sun's collected rays,
Delight the citizen, who, gasping there,
Breathes clouds of dust, and calls it country air.
Oh sweet retirement, who would balk the thought,
That could afford retirement, or could not ?
'Tis such an easy walk, so smooth and straight,
The second mile-stone fronts the garden gate ;
A step if fair, and if a shower approach,
You find safe shelter in the next stage-coach.
There, prison'd in a parlour snug and small,
Like bottled wasps upon a southern wall,
The man of business and his friends compress'd,
Forget their labours, and yet find no rest ;
But still 'tis rural—trees are to be seen
From every window, and the fields are green ;
Ducks paddle in the pond before the door,
And what could a remoter scene show more ?

A sense of elegance we rarely find
The portion of a mean or vulgar mind,
And ignorance of better things makes man,
Who cannot much, rejoice in what he can ;
And he that deems his leisure well bestow'd
In contemplation of a turnpike road,
Is occupied as well, employs his hours
As wisely, and as much improves his powers,
As he that slumbers in pavilions, grac'd
With all the charms of an accomplish'd taste.
Yet hence, alas ! insolvencies ; and hence
Th' unpitied victim of ill-judg'd expense,
From all his wearisome engagements freed,
Shakes hands with business, and retires indeed.

Your prudent grand-mammas, ye modern belles,
Content with Bristol, Bath, and Tunbridge-wells,
When health requir'd it, would consent to roam,
Else more attach'd to pleasures found at home.
But now alike, gay widow, virgin, wife,
Ingénious to diversify dull life,
In coaches, chaises, caravans, and hoys,
Fly to the coast for daily, nightly joys,
And all, impatient of dry land, agree,
With one consent, to rush into the sea.—
Ocean exhibits, fathomless and broad,
Much of the power and majesty of God.
He swathes about the swelling of the deep,
That shines and rests, as infants smile and sleep ;
Vast as it is, it answers as it flows
The breathings of the lightest air that blows ;

Curling and whitening over all the waste,
The rising waves obey th' increasing blast;
Abrupt and horrid as the tempest roars,
Thunder and flash upon the steadfast shores,
Till HE that rides the whirlwind checks the rein,
Then all the world of waters sleeps again.—
Nereids or Dryads, as the fashion leads,
Now in the floods, now panting in the meads,
Votaries of pleasure still, where'er she dwells,
Near barren rocks, in palaces, or cells,
O grant a poet leave to recommend
(A poet fond of nature, and your friend)
Her slighted works to your admiring view ;
Her works must needs excel, who fashion'd you.
Would ye, when rambling in your morning ride,
With some unmeaning coxcomb at your side,
Condemn the prattler for his idle pains,
To waste unheard the music of his strains,
And, deaf to all th' impertinence of tongue,
That while it courts, affronts and does you wrong,
Mark well the finish'd plan without a fault,
The seas globose and huge, th' o'erarching vault,
Earth's millions daily fed, a world employ'd
In gathering plenty yet to be enjoy'd,
Till gratitude grew vocal in the praise
Of God, beneficent in all his ways ;
Grac'd with such wisdom, how would beauty shine !
Ye want but that to seem indeed divine.

Anticipated rents, and bills unpaid,
Force many a shining youth into the shade,

Not to redeem his time, but his estate,
 And play the fool, but at a cheaper rate.
 There, hid in loath'd obscurity, remov'd
 From pleasures left, but never more belov'd,
 He just endures, and with a sickly spleen
 Sighs o'er the beauties of the charming scene.
 Nature, indeed, looks prettily in rhyme ;
 Streams tinkle sweetly in poetic chime ;
 The warblings of the blackbird, clear and strong,
 Are musical enough in Thomson's song ;
 And Cobham's groves, and Windsor's green retreats,
 When Pope describes them, have a thousand sweets ;
 He likes the country, but in truth must own,
 Most likes it, when he studies it in town.

Poor Jack—no matter who—for when I blame
 I pity, and must therefore sink the name,
 Liv'd in his saddle, lov'd the chase, the course,
 And always, ere he mounted, kiss'd his horse.
 Th' estate his sires had own'd in ancient years
 Was quickly distanc'd, match'd against a peer's.
 Jack vanish'd, was regretted and forgot ;
 'Tis wild good-nature's never-failing lot.
 At length, when all had long suppos'd him dead,
 By cold submersion, razor, rope or lead,
 My lord, alighting at his usual place,
 The Crown, took notice of an ostler's face.
 Jack knew his friend, but hop'd in that disguise
 He might escape the most observing eyes,
 And whistling, as if unconcern'd and gay,
 Curried his nag, and look'd another way.

Convinc'd at last, upon a nearer view,
'Twas he, the same, the very Jack he knew,
O'erwhelm'd at once with wonder, grief, and joy,
He press'd him much to quit his base employ ;
His countenance, his purse, his heart, his hand,
Influence and power, were all at his command :
Peers are not always generous as well bred,
But Granby was, meant truly what he said.
Jack bow'd, and was oblig'd—confess'd 'twas strange
That so retir'd he should not wish a change,
But knew no medium between guzzling beer,
And his old stint—three thousand pounds a year.

Thus some retire to nourish hopeless woe ;
Some seeking happiness not found below ;
Some to comply with humour, and a mind
To social scenes by nature disinclin'd ;
Some sway'd by fashion, some by deep disgust ;
Some self-impoverish'd, and because they must ;
But few that court retirement are aware
Of half the toils they must encounter there.

Lucrative offices are seldom lost
For want of powers proportion'd to the post :
Give e'en a dunce th' employment he desires,
And he soon finds the talents it requires ;
A business, with an income at his heels,
Furnishes always oil for its own wheels.
But in his arduous enterprise to close
His active years with indolent repose,

He finds the labours of that state exceed
His utmost faculties, severe indeed.
'Tis easy to resign a toilsome place,
But not to manage leisure with a grace ;
Absence of occupation is not rest,
A mind quite vacant is a mind distress'd.
The veteran steed, excus'd his task at length,
In kind compassion of his failing strength,
And turn'd into the park or mead to graze,
Exempt from future service all his days,
There feels a pleasure perfect in its kind,
Ranges at liberty, and snuffs the wind :
But when his lord would quit the busy road,
To taste a joy like that he has bestow'd,
He proves less happy than his favour'd brute,
A life of ease a difficult pursuit.
Thought, to the man that never thinks, may seem
As natural as, when asleep, to dream ;
But reveries (for human minds will act)
Specious in show, impossible in fact,
Those flimsy webs that break as soon as wrought,
Attain not to the dignity of thought :
Nor yet the swarms that occupy the brain,
Where dreams of dress, intrigue, and pleasure reign ;
Nor such as useless conversation breeds,
Or lust engenders, and indulgence feeds.
Whence, and what are we ? to what end ordain'd ?
What means the drama by the world sustain'd ?
Business or vain amusement, care or mirth,
Divide the frail inhabitants of earth.

Is duty a mere sport, or an employ ?
Life an intrusted talent, or a toy ?
Is there, as reason, conscience, scripture, say,
Cause to provide for a great future day,
When, earth's assign'd duration at an end,
Man shall be summon'd and the dead attend ?
The trumpet—will it sound ? the curtain rise ?
And show th' august tribunal of the skies,
Where no prevarication shall avail,
Where eloquence and artifice shall fail,
The pride of arrogant distinctions fall,
And conscience and our conduct judge us all ?
Pardon me, ye that give the midnight oil
To learned cares or philosophic toil,
Though I revere your honourable names,
Your useful labours and important aims,
And hold the world indebted to your aid,
Enrich'd with the discoveries ye have made ;
Yet let me stand excus'd, if I esteem
A mind employ'd on so sublime a theme,
Pushing her bold inquiry to the date
And outline of the present transient state,
And, after poising her adventurous wings,
Settling at last upon eternal things,
Far more intelligent, and better taught
The strenuous use of profitable thought,
Than ye, when happiest, and enlighten'd most,
And highest in renown, can justly boast.

A mind unnerv'd or indispos'd to bear
The weight of subjects worthiest of her care,

Whatever hopes a change of scene inspires,
Must change her nature, or in vain retires.
An idler is a watch that wants both hands,
As useless if it goes as when it stands.
Books, therefore, not the scandal of the shelves,
In which lewd sensualists print out themselves ;
Nor those in which the stage gives vice a blow,
With what success let modern manners show ;
Nor his, who, for the bane of thousands born,
Built God a church, and laugh'd his word to scorn,
Skilful alike to seem devout and just,
And stab religion with a sly side-thrust ;
Nor those of learn'd philologists, who chase
A panting syllable through time and space,
Start it at home, and hunt it in the dark,
To Gaul, to Greece, and into Noah's ark ;
But such as learning without false pretence,
The friend of truth, th' associate of sound sense,
And such as in the zeal of good design,
Strong judgment labouring in the scripture mine,
All such as manly and great souls produce,
Worthy to live, and of eternal use :
Behold in these what leisure hours demand,
Amusement and true knowledge hand in hand.
Luxury gives the mind a childish cast,
And while she polishes, perverts the taste ;
Habits of close attention, thinking heads,
Become more rare as dissipation spreads,
Till authors hear at length one general cry,
Tickle and entertain us, or we die.

The loud demand, from year to year the same,
Beggars invention and makes fancy lame,
Till farce itself, most mournfully jejune,
Calls for the kind assistance of a tune ;
And novels (witness every month's review)
Belie their name, and offer nothing new.
The mind, relaxing into needful sport,
Should turn to writers of an abler sort,
Whose wit well manag'd, and whose classic style,
Give truth a lustre, and make wisdom smile.
Friends (for I cannot stint, as some have done,
Too rigid in my view, that name to one ;
Though one, I grant it, in the generous breast
Will stand advanc'd a step above the rest :
Flowers by that name promiscuously we call,
But one, the rose, the regent of them all)—
Friends, not adopted with a school-boy's haste,
But chosen with a nice discerning taste,
Well born, well disciplin'd, who, plac'd apart
From vulgar minds, have honour much at heart,
And, though the world may think th' ingredients odd,
The love of virtue, and the fear of God !
Such friends prevent what else would soon succeed,
A temper rustic as the life we lead,
And keep the polish of the manners clean,
As theirs who bustle in the busiest scene ;
For solitude, however some may rare,
Seeming a sanctuary, proves a grave,
A sepulchre in which the living lie,
Where all good qualities grow sick and die.

I praise the Frenchman,* his remark was shew'd—
 How sweet, how passing sweet, is solitude !
 But grant me still a friend in my retreat,
 Whom I may whisper—solitude is sweet.
 Yet neither these delights, nor aught beside
 That appetite can ask, or wealth provide,
 Can save us always from a tedious day,
 Or shine the dulness of still life away ;
 Divine communion, carefully enjoy'd,
 Or sought with energy, must fill the void.
 Oh sacred art, to which alone life owes
 Its happiest seasons, and a peaceful close,
 Scorn'd in a world, indebted to that scorn
 For evils daily felt and hardly born,
 Not knowing thee, we reap, with bleeding hands,
 Flowers of rank odour upon thorny lands,
 And while experience cautions us in vain,
 Grasp seeming happiness, and find it pain.
 Despondence, self-deserted in her grief,
 Lost by abandoning her own relief,
 Murmuring and ungrateful discontent,
 That scorns afflictions mercifully meant,
 Those humours tart as wines upon the fret,
 Which idleness and weariness beget ;
 These, and a thousand plagues that haunt the breast,
 Fond of the phantom of an earthly rest,
 Divine communion chases, as the day
 Drives to their dens th' obedient beasts of prey.

~~—~~

* *Brueys*.

See Judah's promis'd king, bereft of all,
Driven out an exile from the face of Saul,
To distant caves the lonely wanderer flies,
To seek that peace a tyrant's frown denies.
Hear the sweet accents of his tuneful voice,
Hear him, o'erwhelm'd with sorrow, yet rejoice ;
No womanish or wailing grief has part,
No, not a moment, in his royal heart ;
'Tis manly music, such as martyrs make,
Suffering with gladness for a Saviour's sake ;
His soul exults, hope animates his lays,
The sense of mercy kindles into praise,
And wilds, familiar with a lion's roar,
Ring with extatic sounds unheard before :
'Tis love like his that can alone defeat
The foes of man, or make a desert sweet.

Religion does not censure or exclude.
Unnumber'd pleasures, harmlessly pursu'd ;
To study culture, and with artful toil
To meliorate and tame the stubborn soil ;
To give dissimilar yet fruitful lands
The grain, or herb, or plant, that each demands ;
To cherish virtue in a humble state,
And share the joys your bounty may create ;
To mark the matchless workings of the power
That shuts within its seed the future flower,
Bid these in elegance of form excel,
In colour these, and those delight the smell ;
Sends nature forth the daughter of the skies,
To dance on earth, and charm all human eyes ;

To teach the canvass innocent deceit,
 Or lay the landscape on the snowy sheet—
 These, these are arts pursu'd without a crime,
 That leave no stain upon the wing of time.

Me poetry (or, rather, notes that aim
 Feebly and vainly at poetic fame)
 Employs, shut out from more important views,
 Fast by the banks of the slow winding Ouse ;
 Content if, thus sequester'd, I may raise
 A monitor's, though not a poet's praise,
 And while I teach an art too little known,
 To close life wisely, may not waste my own.

THE
DIVERTING HISTORY
OF
JOHN GILPIN;

SHOWING HOW HE WENT FARTHER THAN HE INTENDED,
AND CAME SAFE HOME AGAIN.

JOHN Gilpin was a citizen
Of credit and renown;
A train-band Captain he was he
Of famous London town.

John Gilpin's spouse said to her dear—
Though wedded we have been
These twice ten tedious years, yet we
No holiday have seen.

To-morrow is our wedding-day
And we will then repair
Unto the Bell at Edmonton
All in a chaise and pair.

My sister and my sister's child,
Myself and children three,
Will fill the chaise ; so you must ride
On horseback after we.

He soon replied—I do admire
Of womankind but one,
And you are she, my dearest dear,
Therefore it shall be done.

I am a linen draper bold,
As all the world doth know,
And my good friend the calender
Will lend his horse to go.

Quoth Mrs. Gilpin—that's well said;
And, for that wine is dear,
We will be furnish'd with our own,
Which is both bright and clear.

John Gilpin kiss'd his loving wife;
O'erjoy'd was he to find
That, though on pleasure she was bent,
She had a frugal mind.

The morning came, the chaise was brought,
But yet was not allow'd
To drive up to the door, lest all
Should say that she was proud.

So three doors off the chaise was stay'd,
Where they did all get in;
Six precious souls, and all agog
To dash through thick and thin!

Smack went the whip, round went the wheels,
Were never folk so glad,
The stones did rattle underneath,
As if Cheapside were mad.

John Gilpin at his horse's side
Seiz'd fast the flowing mane,
And up he got in haste to ride,
But soon came down again;

For saddle-tree scarce reach'd had he,
His journey to begin,
When turning round his head, he saw
Three customers come in.

So down he came ; for loss of time,
Although it griev'd him sore,
Yet loss of pence full well he knew
Would trouble him much more.

'Twas long before the customers
Were suited to their mind,
When Betty screaming came down stairs—
“ The wine is left behind ! ”

Good lack ! quoth he—yet bring it me,
My leathern belt likewise,
In which I bear my trusty sword
When I do exercise.

Now Mistress Gilpin (careful soul)
Had two stone bottles found,
To hold the liquor that she lov'd,
And keep it safe and sound.

Each bottle had a curling ear,
Through which the belt he drew,
And hung a bottle on each side,
To make his balance true.

Then, over all, that he might be
Equipp'd from top to toe,
His long red cloak, well brush'd and neat,
He manfully did throw.

Now see him mounted once again
Upon his nimble steed,
Full slowly, pacing o'er the stones
With caution and good heed !

But, finding soon a smoother road
Beneath his well-shod feet,
The snorting beast began to trot,
Which galf'd him in his seat.

So, fair and softly, John he cried,
But John he cried in vain ;
That trot became a gallop soon,
In spite of curb and rein.

So, stooping down, as needs he must
Who cannot sit upright,
He grasp'd the mane with both his hands,
And eke with all his might.

His horse, who never in that sort
Had handled been before,
What thing upon his back had got
Did wonder more and more.

Away went Gilpin, neck or naught ;
Away went hat and wig !—
He little dreamt when he set out
Of running such a rig !

The wind did blow, the cloak did fly
Like streamer long and gay,

Till loop and button failing both,
At last it flew away.

Then might all people well discern,
The bottles he had slung ;
A bottle swinging at each side,
As hath been said or sung.

The dogs did bark, the children scream'd,
Up flew the windows all ;
And every soul cried out—Well done !
As loud as he could bawl.

Away went Gilpin—who but he ?
His fame soon spread around—
He carries weight ! he rides a race !
'Tis for a thousand pound !

And still, as fast as he drew near,
'Twas wonderful to view
How in a trice the turnpike-men
Their gates wide open threw.

And now, as he went bowing down
His reeking head full low,
The bottles twain behind his back
Were shatter'd at a blow.

Down ran the wine into the road,
Most piteous to be seen,
Which made his horse's flanks to smok
As they had basted been.

But still he seem'd to carry weight,
With leathern girdle brace'd ;
For all might see the bottle necks
Still dangling at his waist.

Thus all through merry Islington
These gambols he did play,
And till he came unto the Wash
Of Edmonton so gay.

And there he threw the Wash about
On both sides of the way,
Just like unto a trundling mop,
Or a wild goose at play.

At Edmonton his loving wife
From the balcony spied,
Her tender husband, wondering much
To see how he did ride.

Stop, stop, John Gilpin !—Here's the house—
They all at once did cry ;
The dinner waits, and we are tir'd :
Said Gilpin—So am I !

But yet his horse was not a whit
Inclin'd to tarry there ;
For why ?—his owner had a house
Full ten miles off, at Ware.

So like an arrow swift he flew,
Shot by an archer strong ;

So he did fly, which brings me to
The middle of my song.

Away went Gilpin out of breath,
And sore against his will,
Till at his friend the calender's
His horse at last stood still.

The calender, amaz'd to see
His neighbour in such trim,
Laid down his pipe, flew to the gate,
And thus accosted him :—

What news ? what news ? your tidings tell ;
Tell me you must and shall—
Say why bare-headed you are come,
Or why you come at all.

Now Gilpin had a pleasant wit,
And lov'd a timely joke ;
And thus unto the calender
In merry guise he spoke :—

I came because your horse would come ;
And, if I well forebode,
My hat and wig will soon be here—
They are upon the road.

The calender, right glad to find
His friend in merry pin,
Return'd him not a single word,
But to the house went in.

When straight he came with hat and wig ;
A wig that flow'd behind,
A hat not much the worse for wear,
Each comely in its kind.

He held them up, and in his turn
Thus show'd his ready wit—
My head is twice as big as yours,
They therefore needs must fit.

But let me scrape the dirt away
That hangs upon your face ;
And stop and eat, for well you may
Be in a hungry case.

Said John—it is my wedding-day,
And all the world would stare,
If wife should dine at Edmonton,
And I should dine at Ware !

So, turning to his horse, he said—
I am in haste to dine ;
'Twas for your pleasure you came here,
You shall go back for mine.

Ah, luckless speech and bootless boast !
For which he paid full dear ;
For, while he spake, a braying ass
Did sing most loud and clear ;

Whereat his horse did snort, as he
Had heard a lion roar,
And gallop'd off with all his might,
As he had done before.

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went Gilpin's hat and wig ;
He lost them sooner than at first—
For why ? they were too big !

Now, Mrs. Gilpin, when she saw
Her husband posting down
Into the country far away,
She pull'd out half a crown ;

And thus unto the youth she said,
That drove them to the Bell—
This shall be yours when you bring back
My husband safe and well,

The youth did ride, and soon did meet
John coming back again ;
Whom in a trice he tried to stop
By catching at his rein ;

But, not performing what he meant,
And gladly would have done,
The frighted steed he frighted more,
And made him faster run.

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went post-boy at his heels !—
The post-boy's horse right glad to miss
The lumbering of the wheels.

Six gentlemen upon the road,
Thus seeing Gilpin fly,
With post-boy scampering in the rear,
They rais'd the hue and cry :—

Stop thief! stop thief!—a highwayman!
 Not one of them was mute;
 And all and each that pass'd that way
 Did join in the pursuit.

And now the turnpike gates again
 Flew open in short space;
 The toll-men thinking as before,
 That Gilpin rode a race.

And so he did—and won it too!
 For he got first to town;
 Nor stopp'd till where he had got up
 He did again get down.

Now let us sing—long live the king,
 And Gilpin, long live he;
 And, when he next doth ride abroad,
 May I be there to see!

VERSES

ON THE YEARLY BILL OF MORTALITY IN THE
 TOWN OF NORTHAMPTON, FOR THE YEAR
 1790.

Ne commonentem recta sperne.

BUCHANAN.

Despise not my good counsel.

HE who sits from day to day
 Where the prison'd lark is hung,
 Heedless of his loudest lay,
 Hardly knows that he has sung.

Where the watchman in his round
Nightly lifts his voice on high,
None, accustom'd to the sound,
Wakes the sooner for his cry.

So your Verse-man I, and Clerk,
Yearly in my song proclaim
Death at hand—yourselves his mark—
And the foe's unerring aim.

Duly at my time I come,
Publishing to all aloud—
Soon the grave must be your home,
And your only suit, a shroud.

But the monitory strain,
Oft repeated in your ears,
Seems to sound too much in vain,
Wins no notice, wakes no fears.

Can a truth, by all confess'd,
Of such magnitude and weight,
Grow, by being oft express'd,
Trivial as a parrot's prate?

Pleasure's call attention wins,
Hear it often as we may;
New as ever seem our sins,
Though committed every day.

Death and Judgment, Heav'n and Hell—
These alone, so often heard,
No more move us than the bell,
When some stranger is interr'd.

Oh then, ere the turf or tomb
Cover us from every eye,
Spirit of instruction, come,
Make us learn that we must die !

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

TO JOHN JOHNSON,

ON HIS PRESENTING ME WITH AN ANTIQUE BUST
OF HOMER.

KINSMAN beloved, and as a son by me !
When I behold this fruit of thy regard,
The sculptur'd form of my old favorite Bard !
I reverence feel for him, and love for thee.

Joy too, and grief, much joy that there should be
Wise men, and learn'd, who grudge not to reward
With some applause my bold attempt, and hard,
Which others scorn. Critics by courtesy !

The grief is this, that sunk in Homer's mine,
I lose my precious years, now soon to fail !
Handling his gold, which, howsoe'er it shine,
Proves dross when balanc'd in the Christian scale.

Be wiser thou, like our forefather DONNE ;
Seek heavenly wealth, and work for God alone !

TO THE REV. MR. NEWTON,
ON HIS RETURN FROM RAMSGATE.

THAT ocean you of late survey'd,
Those rocks I too have seen,
But I, afflicted and dismay'd,
You, tranquil and serene.

You, from the flood-controlling steep,
Saw stretch'd before your view,
With conscious joy the threatening deep,
No longer such to you.

To me the waves that ceaseless broke
Upon the dangerous coast,
Hoarsely and ominously spoke
Of all my treasure lost.

Your sea of troubles you have past,
And found the peaceful shore ;
I, tempest toss'd, and wreck'd at last,
Come home to port no more.



LOVE ABUSED.

WHAT is there in the vale of life,
Half so delightful as a wife,
When friendship, love, and peace combine
To stamp the marriage bond divine ?
The stream of pure and genuine love
Derives its current from above ;

And earth a second Eden shows,
 Where'er the healing water flows.
 But ah ! if from the dykes and drains
 Of sensual nature's feverish veins,
 Lust, like a lawless headstrong flood,
 Impregnated with ooze and mud,
 Descending fast on every side,
 Once mingles with the sacred tide,
 Farewel the soul-enlivening scene !
 The banks that wore a smiling green,
 With rank defilement overspread,
 Bewail their flowery beauties dead.
 The stream polluted, dark and dull,
 Diffused into a stygian pool,
 Through life's last melancholy years
 Is fed with ever flowing tears.

Complaints supply the zephyr's part,
 And sighs that heave a breaking heart.

EPITAPH

ON MR. CHESTER, OF CHICHELEY.

TEARS flow and cease not, where the good man
 lies,
 Till all who knew him follow to the skies.
 Tears therefore fall where Chester's ashes sleep,
 Him, wife, friends, brothers, children, servants,
 weep—
 And justly—few shall ever him transcend
 As husband, parent, brother, master, friend.

EPITAPH.

ON MRS. M. HIGGINS, OF WESTON.

LAURELS may flourish round the conqueror's
tomb,

But happiest they, who win the world to come :

Believers have a silent field to fight,

And their exploits are veil'd from human sight.

They in some nook where little known they dwell,

Kneel, pray in faith, and rout the hosts of hell :

Eternal triumphs crown their toils divine,

And all those triumphs, Mary, now are thine.

TO COUNT GRAVINA,

*On his translating the Author's Song on a Rose
into Italian Verse.*

MY Rose, Gravina, blooms anew,

And steep'd not now in rain,

But in Castalian streams by you,

Will never fade again.

INSCRIPTION

*For a Stone erected at the sowing of a Grove of
Oaks, at Chillington, the seat of Thomas
Gifford, Esq. 1790.*

OTHER stones the era tell

When some feeble mortal fell.

I stand here to date the birth
Of these hardy sons of earth.

Which shall longest brave the sky,
Storm and frost ?—these oaks or I ?
Pass an age or two away,
I must moulder, and decay,
But the years that crumble me
Shall invigorate the tree,
Spread the branch, dilate its size,
Lift its summit to the skies,

Cherish honour, virtue, truth !
So shalt thou prolong thy youth :
Wanting these, however fast
Man be fixt, and form'd to last,
He is lifeless even now,
Stone at heart, and cannot grow.

INSCRIPTION

For a Hermitage in the Author's Garden.

THIS cabin, Mary, in my sight appears,
Built as it has been in our waning years,
A rest afforded to our weary feet,
Preliminary to—the last retreat.

STANZAS

On the late indecent Liberties taken with the Remains of the great Milton.—Anno 1790.

ME too, perchance, in future days,
The sculptur'd stone shall show,
With Paphian Myrtle, or with Bays
Parnassian, on my brow.

But I, or ere that season come,
Escap'd from every care,
Shall reach my refuge in the tomb,
And sleep securely there.*

So sang in Roman tone and style,
The youthful Bard, ere long
Ordain'd to grace his native isle
With her sublimest song,

Who then but must conceive disdain,
Hearing the deed unblest
Of wretches who have dar'd profane
His dread sepulchral rest.

Ill fare the hands that heav'd the stones
Where Milton's ashes lay,
That trembled not to grasp his bones,
And steal his dust away.

* *Forsitan et nostros ducat de marmore vultus
Nectens aut Paphia myrti aut Parnasside lauri
Frende comas—At ego securo pace quiescam.*

Oh ill-requited Bard ! neglect
Thy living worth repaid,
And blind idolatrous respect
As much affronts thee dead.

A TALE

*Founded on a Fact, which happened in January,
1779.*

WHERE Humber pours his rich commercial stream
There dwelt a wretch who breath'd but to blaspheme.
In subterraneous caves his life he led,
Black as the mine in which he wrought for bread.
When on a day, emerging from the deep,
A Sabbath-day ! (such Sabbaths thousands keep !)
The wages of his weekly toil he bore
To buy a cock—whose blood might win him more ;
As if the noblest of the feather'd kind
Were but for battle and for death design'd ;
As if the consecrated hours were meant
For sport, to minds on cruelty intent ;
It chanc'd (such chances Providence obey !)
He met a fellow labourer on the way,
Whose heart the same desires had once inflam'd ;
But now the savage temper was reclaim'd,
Persuasion on his lips had taken place ;
For all plead well who plead the cause of Grace
His iron heart with scripture he assail'd,
Woo'd him to hear a sermon, and prevail'd ;

His faithful bow the mighty preacher drew,
 Swift, as the lightning-glimpse the arrow flew ;
 He wept ; he trembled ; cast his eyes around,
 To find a worse than he ; but none he found.
 He felt his sins, and wonder'd he should feel ;
 Grace made the wound, and Grace alone could heal :

Now farewell oaths and blasphemies, and lies !
 He quits the sinner's, for the martyr's prize.
 That holy day was wash'd with many a tear,
 Gilded with hope, yet shaded too by fear.
 The next, his swarthy brethren of the mine
 Learn'd by his alter'd speech the change divine !
 Laugh'd when they should have wept, and swore the
 day

Was nigh, when he would swear as fast as they.
 "No"—said the Penitent :—"Such words shall share
 This breath no more ; devoted now to prayer.
 Oh ! if Thou seest, (thine eye the future sees !)
 That I shall yet again blaspheme like these ;
 Now strike me to the ground, on which I kneel,
 Ere yet this heart relapses into steel ;
 Now take me to that Heaven, I once defied,
 Thy presence, thy embrace !" —He spoke and died :



A TALE.

IN Scotland's realm, where trees are few,
 Nor even shrubs abound ;
 But where, however bleak the view,
 Some better things are found :

For husband there, and wife may boast
Their union undefil'd !
And false ones are as rare almost,
As hedge-rows in the wild :

In Scotland's realm, forlorn and bare,
This history chanc'd of late—
This history of a wedded pair,
A Chaffinch and his mate.

The spring drew near, each felt a breast
With genial instinct fill'd ;
They pair'd, and only wish'd a nest,
But found not where to build.

The heaths uncover'd, and the moors,
Except with snow and sleet ;
Sea-beaten rocks and naked shores
Could yield them no retreat.

Long time a breeding place they sought,
Till both grew vex'd and tir'd ;
At length a ship arriving, brought
The good so long desir'd.

A ship !—Could such a restless thing,
Afford them place to rest ?
Or was the merchant charg'd to bring
The homeless birds a nest ?

Hush !—Silent hearers profit most !—
This racer of the sea
Prov'd kinder to them than the coast ;
It serv'd them with a tree.

But such a tree ! 'twas shaven deal,
The tree they call a mast ;
And had a hollow with a wheel,
Through which the tackle pass'd.

Within that cavity aloft
Their roofless home they fixt ;
Form'd with materials neat and soft,
Bents, wool, and feathers mixt.

Four ivory eggs soon pave its floor,
With russet specks bedight :—
The vessel weighs—forsakes the shore,
And lessens to the sight.

The mother bird is gone to sea,
As she had chang'd her kind ;
But goes the mate ? Far wiser he
Is doubtless left behind.

No !—Soon as from ashore he saw
The winged mansion move ;
He flew to reach it, by a law
Of never-failing love !

Then perching at his consort's side,
Was briskly borne along ;
The billows and the blasts defied,
And cheer'd her with a song.

The seaman, with sincere delight,
His feather'd shipmate eyes,
Scarce less exulting in the sight,
Than when he tows a prize.

For seamen much believe in signs,
And from a chance so new
Each some approaching good divines,
And may his hopes be true!

Hail! honour'd land! a desert, where
Not even birds can hide;
Yet parent of this loving pair,
Whom nothing could divide.

And ye, who rather than resign
Your matrimonial plan,
Were not afraid to plough the brine,
In company with man.

To whose lean country, much disdain
We English often show;
Yet from a richer, nothing gain
But wantonness and wo.

Be it your fortune, year by year,
The same resource to prove;
And may ye, sometimes landing here,
Instruct us how to love!

THE FOUR AGES.

[A BRIEF FRAGMENT OF AN EXTENSIVE PROJECTED POEM.]

"I COULD be well content, allow'd the use
Of past experience, and the wisdom glean'd

From worn-out follies, now acknowledg'd such,
To recommence life's trial, in the hope
Of fewer errors, on a second proof!"

Thus, while grey evening lull'd the wind, and call'd
Fresh odours from the shrubbery at my side,
Taking my lonely winding walk I mus'd,
And held accustom'd conference with my heart;
When from within it thus a voice replied.

" Could'st thou in truth ? and art thou taught at
length
This wisdom, and but this from all the past ?
Is not the pardon of thy long arrear,
Time wasted, violated laws, abuse
Of talents, judgments, mercies, better far
Than opportunity vouchsaf'd to err
With less excuse, and haply, worse effect ?"

I heard, and acquiesc'd ; then to and fro
Oft pacing, as the mariner his deck,
My gravelly bounds, from self to human kind
I pass'd, and next consider'd—What is Man ?

Knows he his origin ?—can he ascend
By reminiscence to his earliest date ?
Slept he in Adam ? and in those from him
Through numerous generations, till he found
At length his destin'd moment to be born ?
Or was he not till fashion'd in the womb ?
Deep mysteries both ! which schoolmen' much have
toil'd
To unriddle, and have left them mysteries still.

It is an evil incident to man,
And of the worst, that unexplor'd he leaves
Truths useful, and attainable with ease,
To search forbidden deeps, where mystery lies
Not to be solv'd, and useless if it might.
Mysteries are food for angels ; they digest
With ease, and find them nutriment ; but man,
While yet he dwells below, must stoop to glean
His manna from the ground, or starve, and die.

TO THE NIGHTINGALE,

*Which the Author heard sing on New-Year's
day, 1792.*

WHENCE is it, that amaz'd I hear
From yonder wither'd spray,
This foremost morn of all the year,
The melody of May.

And why, since thousands would be proud
Of such a favour shewn,
Am I selected from the crowd,
To witness it alone !

Sing'st thou, sweet Philomel, to me
For that I also long
Have practis'd in the groves like thee,
Though not like thee in song ?

Or sing'st thou rather under force
 Of some divine command,
 Commission'd to presage a course
 Of happier days at hand ?

Thrice welcome, then ! for many a long
 And joyless year have I,
 As thou to day, put forth my song
 Beneath a wintry sky.

But thee no wintry skies can harm,
 Who only need'st to sing,
 To make e'en January charm,
 And every season spring.



TO A YOUNG FRIEND,

*On his arrival at Cambridge wet, when no rain
 had fallen there.*

IF Gideon's fleece, which drench'd with dew he found,
 While moisture none refresh'd the herbs around,
 Might fitly represent the Church, endow'd
 With heavenly gifts, to heathens not allow'd ;
 In pledge, perhaps, of favours from on high,
 Thy locks were wet, when other locks were dry.
 Heaven grant us half the omen ! may we see
 Not drought on others, but much dew on thee !

TO WILLIAM HAYLEY, ESQ.

Weston, June 20, 1793.

DEAR architect of fine *châteaux in air*,
Worthier to stand forever if they could,
Than any built of stone or yet of wood,
For back of royal elephant to bear!

Oh for permission from the skies to share,
Much to thy own, though little to thy good,
With thee (not subject to the jealous mood)
A partnership of literary ware!

But I am bankrupt now; and doom'd henceforth
To drudge in descant dry, on others' lays;
Bards, I acknowledge, of unequall'd worth!
But what is commentator's happiest praise?

That he has furnish'd lights for other eyes,
Which they who need them use, and then despise.



TO MY COUSIN ANNE BODHAM,

*On receiving from her a Net-work Purse made
by herself.*

MY gentle Anne, whom heretofore,
When I was young, and thou no more
Than plaything for a nurse,

I danc'd and fondled on my knee,
 A kitten both in size and glee !
 I thank thee for my Purse.

Gold pays the worth of all things here ;
 But not of love ;—that gem's too dear
 For richest rogues to win it ;
 I, therefore, as a proof of love,
 Esteem thy present far above
 The best things kept within it.



TO MRS. KING,

ON HER KIND PRESENT TO THE AUTHOR,

A Patch-work Counterpane of her own making.

THE Bard, if e'er he feel at all,
 Must sure be quicken'd by a call,
 Both on his heart and head,
 To pay with tuneful thanks the care
 And kindness of a lady fair,
 Who deigns to deck his bed.

A bed like this, in ancient time,
 On Ida's barren top sublime
 (As Homer's epic shows)
 Compos'd of sweetest vernal flowers,
 Without the aid of sun or showers,
 For Jove and Juno rose.

Less beautiful, however gay,
Is that which in the scorching day
 Receives the weary swain ;
Who, laying his long scythe aside,
Sleeps on some bank, with daisies pied,
 Till rous'd to toil again.

What labours of the loom I see !
Looms numberless have groan'd for me ;
 Should every maiden come
To scramble for the patch, that bears
The impress of the robe she wears,
 The bell would toll for some.

And O! what havoc would ensue !:
This bright display of every hue:
 All in a moment fled !
As if a storm should strip the bowers
Of all their tendrils, leaves, and flowers,
 Each pocketing a shred.

Thanks then to every gentle fair,
Who will not come to pick me bare
 As bird of borrowed feather ;
And thanks to one, above them all,
The gentle Fair of Pirtenhall,
 Who put THE WHOLE TOGETHER !

GRATITUDE.

ADDRESSED TO LADY HESKETH.

THIS Cap, that so stately appears,
With ribbon-bound tassel on high,
Which seems by the crest that it rears
Ambitious of brushing the sky :
This Cap to my cousin I owe,
She gave it, and gave me beside,
Wreath'd into an elegant bow,
The Ribbon with which it is tied.

This wheel-footed study ing chair,
Contriv'd both for toil and repose,
Wide-elbow'd and wadded with hair,
In which I both scribble and doze,
Bright studded to dazzle the eyes,
And rival in lustre of that,
In which, or astronomy lies,
Fair Cassiopeia sat.

These carpets, so soft to the foot,
Caledonia's traffic and pride !
O spare them, ye Knights of the Boot !
Escap'd from a cross country ride !
This table and mirror within,
Secure from collision and dust,
At which I oft shave cheek and chin,
And periwig nicely adjust.

This moveable structure of shelves,
For its beauty admir'd and its use,
And charg'd with octavos and twelves.
The gayest I had to produce,
Where, flaming in scarlet and gold,
My poems enchanted I view,
And hope, in due time, to behold
My Iliad and Odyssey too.

This China, that decks th' alcove,
Which here people-call a beaufette,
But what the gods call it above,
Has ne'er been reveal'd to us yet :
These curtains, that keep the room warm
Or cool, as the season demands ;
Those stoves, that for pattern and form,
Seem the labour of Mulciber's hands.

All these are not half that I owe
To one from our earliest youth,
To me ever ready to show
Benignity, friendship, and truth ;
For Time, the destroyer declar'd,
And foe of our perishing kind,
If even her face he has spar'd,
Much less could he alter her mind.

Thus compass'd about with the goods
And chattels of leisure and ease,
I indulge my poetical moods
In many such fancies as these ;

And fancies I fear they will seem,
 Poets' goods are not often so fine ;
 The poets will swear, that I dream,
 When I sing of the splendour of mine.

LINES

ON THE AUTHOR BECOMING ACQUAINTED WITH
 WILLIAM HAYLEY, ESQ,

MYSTERIOUS are his ways, whose power
 Brings forth that unexpected hour,
 When minds, that never met before,
 Shall meet, unite, and part no more :
 It is th' allotment of the skies,
 The hand of the supremely wise,
 That guides and governs our affections,
 And plans and orders our connections.

SONNET.

MARY! I want a lyre with other strings ;
 Such aid from heaven, as some have feign'd they drew !
 An eloquence scarce given to mortals, new,
 And undebas'd by praise of meaner things !
 That ere through age or wo I shed my wings,
 I may record thy worth, with honour due,
 In verse as musical as thou art true,
 Verse, that immortalizes whom it sings !

But thou hast little need : There is a book,
By seraphs writ, with beams of heavenly light,
On which the eyes of God not rarely look ;
A chronicle of actions, just and bright !

There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary, shine,
And since thou own'st that praise, I spare thee mine.



EPITAPH ON FOP :

A DOG BELONGING TO LADY THROCKMORTON.

THOUGH once a puppy, and though Fop by name,
Here moulders one, whose bones some honour claim ;
No sycophant, although of spaniel-race !
And though no hound, a martyr to the chase !
Ye squirrels, rabbits, leverets, rejoice !
Your haunts no longer echo to his voice,
This record of his fate exulting view !
He died worn out with vain pursuit of you.

“ Yes ! ” th' indignant shade of Fop replies,
“ And, worn with vain pursuit, Man also dies.”



TO GEORGE ROMNEY, ESQ.

ROMNEY ! expert, infallible to trace,
On chart or canvas, not the form alone,
And 'semblance, but, however faintly shewn,
The mind's impression too on every face,

With strokes that time ought never to erase :
 Thou hast so pencil'd mine, that though I own
 The subject worthless, I have never known
 The artist shining with superior grace.

But this I mark, that symptoms none of wo,
 In thy incomparable work appear :
 Well ! I am satisfied it should be so,
 Since, on maturer thought, the cause is clear ;

For in my looks what sorrow could'st thou see,
 While I was Hayley's guest, and sat to thee ?



TO DR. AUSTIN,

OF CECIL STREET, LONDON.

AUSTIN ! accept a grateful verse from me !
 The Poet's treasure ! no inglorious fee !
 Lov'd by the Muses, thy ingenuous mind
 Pleasing requital in a verse may find ;
 Verse oft has dash'd the scythe of Time aside
 Immortalizing names which else had died !

And oh ! could I command the glittering wealth,
 With which sick kings are glad to purchase health ;
 Yet, if extensive fame, and sure to live,
 Were in the power of verse like mine to give,
 I would not recompense his art with less,
 Who, giving Mary health, heals my distress.

Friend of my friend ! I love thee, though unknown,
And boldly call thee, being his, my own.

CATHARINA.**THE SECOND PART.**

On her Marriage to **GEORGE COURTENEY, Esq.**

BELIEVE it or not, as you choose,
The doctrine is certainly true,
That the future is known to the muse,
And poets are oracles too.

I did but express a desire
To see Catharina at home,
At the side of my friend George's fire,
And lo ! she is actually come.

And such prophecy some may despise ;
But the wish of a poet and friend
Perhaps is approv'd in the skies,
And therefore attains to its end.

'Twas a wish, that flew ardently forth,
From a bosom effectually warm'd
With the talents, the graces, and worth
Of the person, for whom it was form'd.

Maria would leave us, I knew,
To the grief and regret of us all ;
But less to our grief, could we view
Catharina the queen of the hall.

And therefore, I wish'd as I did,
 And therefore, this union of hands
 Not a whisper was heard to forbid,
 But all cry amen to the bands.

Since, therefore, I seem to incur
 No danger of wishing in vain,
 When making good wishes for her,
 I will e'en to my wishes again.

With one I have made her a wife,
 And now I will try with another,
 Which I cannot suppress for my life,
 How soon I can make her a mother.

TO MARY.

THE twentieth year is well nigh past,
 Since first our sky was overcast,
 Ah would that this might be the last !
My Mary !

Thy spirits have a fainter flow,
 I see thee daily weaker grow—
 'Twas my distress that brought thee low,
My Mary !

Thy needles, once a shining store !
 For my sake restless heretofore ;
 Now rust disus'd, and shine no more,
My Mary !

For though thou gladly wouldst fulfill
 The same kind office for me still,
 Thy sight now seconds not thy will,
My Mary !

But well thou play'st the huswife's part ;
And all thy threads with magic art
Have wound themselves about this heart,

My Mary !

Thy indistinct expressions seem
Like language utter'd in a dream ;
Yet me they charm, whate'er the theme,

My Mary !

Thy silver locks, once auburn bright !
Are still more lovely in my sight
Than golden beams of orient light,

My Mary !

For could I view nor them nor thee,
What sight worth seeing could I see ?
The sun would rise in vain for me,

My Mary !

Partakers of thy sad decline,
Thy hands their little force resign ;
Yet, gently prest, press gently mine,

My Mary !

Such feebleness of limbs thou prov'st
That now, at every step thou mov'st
Upheld by two, yet still thou lov'st,

My Mary !

And still to love, though prest with ill,
In wintry age to feel no chill,
With me, is to be lovely still,

My Mary !

But ah ! by constant heed I know,
 How oft the sadness that I show,
 Transforms thy smiles to looks of wo,

My Mary !

And should my future lot be cast
 With much resemblance of the past,
 Thy worn out heart will break at last,

My Mary !

THE CAST-AWAY.

OBSCUREST night involv'd the sky,

Th' Atlantic billows roar'd,
 When such a destin'd wretch as I,
 Wash'd headlong from on board,
 Of friends, of hope, of all bereft,
 His floating home forever left.

No braver chief could Albion boast

Than he with whom he went,
 Nor ever ship left Albion's coast,
 With warmer wishes sent.

He lov'd them both, but both in vain,
 Nor him beheld, nor her again.

Not long beneath the 'whelming brine,

Expert to swim, he lay ;
 Nor soon he felt his strength decline,
 Or courage die away ;
 But wag'd with death a lasting strife,
 Supported by despair of life.

He shouted ; nor his friends had fail'd
To check the vessel's course,
But so the furious blast prevail'd,
That, pitiless perforce,
They left their out-cast mate behind,
And scudded still before the wind.

Some succour yet they could afford ;
And such as storms allow,
The cask, the coop, the floated cord
Delay'd not to bestow.
But he (they new) nor ship, nor shore,
Whate'er they gave, should visit more.

Nor, cruel as it seem'd, could he,
Their haste himself condemn,
Aware that flight, in such a sea,
Alone could rescue them :
Yet bitter felt it still to die
Deserted, and his friends so nigh.

He long survives, who lives an hour
In ocean, self-upheld :
And so long he, with unspent power,
His destiny repell'd :
And ever, as the minutes flew,
Entreated help, or cried—" Adieu !"

At length, his transient respite past,
His comrades, who before

Had heard his voice in every blast,
 Could catch the sound no more.
 For then by toil subdu'd, he drank
 The stifling wave, and then he sank.

No poet wept him ; but the page
 Of narrative sincere,
 That tells his name, his worth, his age,
 Is wet with Anson's tear.
 And tears, by bards or heroes shed,
 Alike immortalize the dead.

I therefore purpose not, or dream,
 Descanting on his fate,
 To give the melancholy theme
 A more enduring date.
 But misery still delights to trace
 Its 'semblance in another's case.

No voice divine the storm allay'd,
 No light propitious shone ;
 When snatch'd from all effectual aid,
 We perish'd each alone ;
 But I beneath a rougher sea,
 And 'whelm'd in deeper gulfs than he.

LINES.

*Composed for a memorial of ASHLEY COWPER,
 Esq. immediately after his death, by his
 Nephew WILLIAM of WESTON.*

FAREWELL ! endued with all that could engage
 All hearts to love thee, both in youth and age !

In prime of life, for sprightliness enroll'd
 Among the gay, yet virtuous as the old ;
 In life's last stage (Oh blessing rarely found !)
 Pleasant as youth, with all its blossoms crown'd ;
 Through every period of this changeful state,
 Unchang'd thyself ! wise, good, affectionate !

Marble may flatter, and, lest this should seem
 O'ercharg'd with praises on so dear a theme,
 Although thy worth be more than half suppress'd,
 Love shall be satisfied, and veil the rest.

AN ENGLISH VERSIFICATION OF A THOUGHT
 THAT POPPED INTO MY HEAD ABOUT TWO
 MONTHS SINCE.

SWEET stream ! that winds thro' yonder glade,
 Apt emblem of a virtuous maid,
 Silent and chaste, she steals along;
 Far from the world's gay, busy throng ;
 With gentle, yet prevailing force,
 Intent upon her destin'd course :
 Graceful and useful all she does,
 Blessing, and blest, where'er she goes :
 Pure-bosom'd, as that watery glass,
 And heaven reflected in her face.

ON THE SHORTNESS OF HUMAN LIFE.

SUNS that set, and Moons that wane,
 Rise and are restor'd again.

Stars, that orient day subdues,
 Night at her return renews.
 Herbs and flowers, the beauteous birth
 Of the genial womb of earth,
 Suffer but a transient death
 From the winter's cruel breath.
 Zephyr speaks ; serener skies
 Warm the glebe ; and they arise.
 We, alas ! Earth's haughty kings,
 We, that promise mighty things,
 Losing soon life's happy prime,
 Droop and fade in little time.
 Spring returns, but not our bloom,
 Still 'tis winter in the tomb.

EPITAPH ON DR. JOHNSON.

HERE Johnson lies—a sage by all allow'd,
 Whom to have bred may well make England proud ;
 Whose prose was eloquence, by wisdom taught,
 The graceful vehicle of virtuous thought ;
 Whose verse may claim—grave, masculine, and strong,
 Superior praise to the mere poet's song ;
 Who many a noble gift from heaven possess'd,
 And faith at last, alone worth all the rest.
 O man immortal by a double prize !
 By fame on earth—by glory in the skies !

TO A YOUNG LADY, ON HER BIRTH-DAY.

HOW many between east and west
 Disgrace their parent earth.

Whose deeds constrain us to detest
The day that gave them birth !

Not so when Stella's natal morn
Revolving months restore,
We can rejoice that she was born,
And wish her born once more !

EPITAPH

On the Death of SAMUEL ROSE, Esq.

A PARTICULAR FRIEND OF COWPER.

ESTEEM'D, admir'd, and lost in manhood's prime ;
But who may question God's appointed time ?
Rash grief, profane not Rose's hallow'd tomb,
Though Heaven its gifts of earthly hope resume !
Learning, and wit, and eloquence, and truth,
The patient thought of age, the zeal of youth,
To man these bright endowments seem'd to claim.
A long and rich career of legal fame.
But angels often from their sire impart
His early summons to the pure in heart.
Friendship must weep, though Faith with blameless
pride
Tells, how the christian triumph'd as he died.
Earth's dearest blessings round his heart entwin'd,
To God, who gave them all, he all resign'd.

THE COLUBRIAD.

[The occasion on which these lines were written is related by Cowper as follows, in a letter to the Rev. William Unwin in 1782.—“Passing from the

green house to the barn, I saw three kittens looking with a fixt attention on something which lay on the threshold of a door nailed up. I took but little notice of them at first ; but a loud hiss engaged me to attend more closely, when behold—a viper ! the largest I remember to have seen, rearing itself, darting its forked tongue, and ejaculating the aforesaid hiss at the nose of a kitten, almost in contact with his lips. I ran into the hall for a hoe with a long handle, with which I intended to assail him, and returning in a few seconds missed him. He was gone, and I feared had escaped me. Still however the kitten sat watching immoveably upon the same spot. I concluded therefore, that, sliding between the door and the threshold, he had found his way out of the garden into the yard. I went round immediately, and there found him in close conversation with the old cat, whose curiosity, being excited by so novel an appearance, inclined her to pat his head repeatedly with her fore-foot, with her claws however sheathed, and not in anger, but in the way of philosophic inquiry and examination. To prevent her falling a victim to so laudable an exercise of her talents, I interposed in a moment with the hoe, and performed upon him an act of decapitation, which, though not immediately mortal, proved so in the end. Had he slid into the passages, where it is dark, or had he when in the yard met with no interruption from the cat, and secreted himself in any of the out-houses, it is hardly possible but that some of the family must have been bitten. He might have been trodden upon without being perceived, and have slipped away before the sufferer could have distinguished what foe had wounded him. Three years ago we discovered one in the same place, which the barber slew with a trowel.”]

CLOSE by the threshold of a door, nail'd fast,
 The kitten. Each kitten look'd against
 Passing swift and inattentive by,
 The three kittens cast a careless eye,
 Not concern'd to know what they did there,
 Deeming kittens worth a poet's care.
 Presently a loud and furious hiss
 Came to stop, and to exclaim—"What's this?"
 Came to I upon the threshold met my view,
 A head erect and eyes of fiery hue,
 A viper, long as Count de Grasse's queue,
 From his head his forked tongue he throws,
 Starting it full against a kitten's nose;
 Who, having never seen in field or house
 The like, sat still and silent, as a mouse.
 Only, projecting with attention due
 Her whisker'd face, she ask'd him—"Who are you?"
 (To the hall went I with pace not slow,
 Not swift as lightning, for a long Dutch hoe;
 With which, well arm'd, I hasten'd to the spot,
 To find the perpetrator. But I found him not;
 And turn'd up the leaves and shrubs around,
 Found only that he was not to be found,
 But all the kittens, sitting as before,
 Sat, watching close the bottom of the door.
 I hope I) the villain I would kill
 Slit between the door and the door's sill;
 And if I make dispatch, and follow hard,
 No doubt, but I shall find him in the yard."
 For long ere now it should have been rehears'd,
 'Twas in the garden that I found him first.

E'en there I found him. There the full grown cat
 His head with velvet paw did gently pat,
 As curious as the kittens erst had been
 To learn what this phenomenon might mean.
 Fill'd with heroic ardour at the sight,
 And fearing every moment he would bite,
 And rob our household of our only cat,
 That was of age, to combat with a rat,
 With out-stretch'd hoe I slew him at the door,
 And taught him *never to come there no more.*

TWO INSCRIPTIONS.

[The following were written by Cowper at the request of Thomas Gifford, Esq. who sowed twenty acres with acorns on each side of his house. These memorials he erected on the occasion, that, when posterity shall be curious to know the age of the oaks, their curiosity may be gratified.—Mr. Gifford ordered his lapidary to cut the characters very deep and in stone extremely hard.]

FIRST INSCRIPTION.

OTHER stones the era tell
 When some feeble mortal fell.
 I stand here to date the birth
 Of these hardy sons of earth. ANNO 1790.

SECOND INSCRIPTION.

READER ! Behold a monument
 That asks no sigh or tear,
 Though it perpetuate th' event
 Of a great burial here. ANNO 1791.

END OF VOLUME I.

4

